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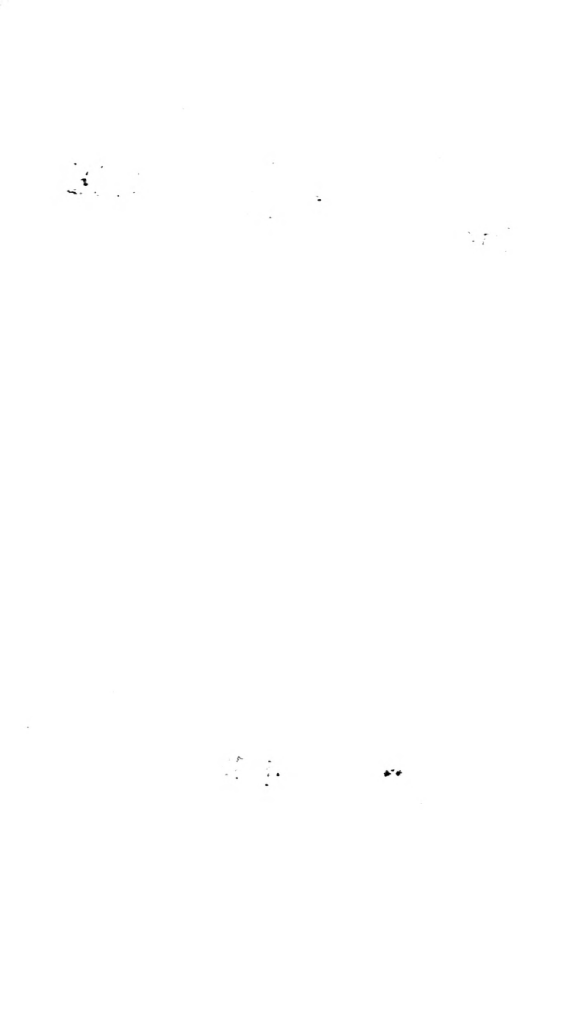
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AN ACCOUNT
OF THE
MANNERS AND CUSTOMS
OF THE
MODERN EGYPTIANS,

WRITTEN IN EGYPT DURING THE YEARS
1833, -34, AND -35.

PARTLY FROM NOTES MADE DURING A FORMER VISIT TO
THAT COUNTRY IN THE YEARS 1825-28.

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OF "THE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS."

IN THREE VOLUMES.
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ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

THIRD EDITION.

SINCE the publication of the first edition of the present work, the studies in which I have been engaged have enabled me to improve it by various corrections and additions; and the success which it has obtained (a success very far beyond my expectations) has excited me to use my utmost endeavours to rectify its errors and supply its defects.

In reading the Kur-án, with an Arabic commentary, I have found that Sale's version, though deserving of high commendation for its general accuracy, is incorrect in many important passages; and hence I have been induced to revise with especial care my abstract of the principal Muslim laws: for as Sale had excellent commentaries to consult, and I, when I composed that abstract, had none, I placed great reliance on his translation. My plan, in the execution of that portion of my work, was to make use of Sale's translation as the basis, and to add what appeared necessary from the *Sunnah* and other sources, chiefly at the dictation of a professor of law, who was my tutor: but I have found that my foundation was in several points faulty.

I am indebted to a gentleman who possesses a thorough knowledge of the spirit of Muslim institutions* for the suggestion of some improvements in the same and other portions of this work; and observations made by several

* David Urquhart, Esq., author of 'The Spirit of the East,' &c.

intelligent critics have lessened the labour of revision and emendation.

I have also profited, on this occasion, by a paper containing a number of corrections and additions written in Egypt, which I had mislaid and forgotten: but none of these are of much importance.

The mode in which Arabic words were transcribed in the previous editions I thought better calculated than any other to enable an English reader, unacquainted with the Arabic language, to pronounce those words with tolerable accuracy; but it was liable to serious objections, and was disagreeable, in some respects, to most Oriental scholars, and to myself. I have therefore now employed, in its stead, as I did in my translation of 'The Thousand and One Nights,' a system congenial with our language, and of the most simple kind; and to this system I adhere in every case, for the sake of uniformity, as well as *truth*.* It requires little explanation: the general reader may be directed to pronounce

"a" as in our word "beggar:"†

"á" as in "father:"‡

"e" as in "bed:"

"é" as in "there:"

"ee" as in "bee:"

"ei" as our word "eye:"

"ey" as in "they:"

"i" as in "bid:"

"o" as in "obey" (short):

"ó" as in "bone:"

"oo" as in "boot:"

"ow" as in "down:"

"u" as in "bull:"

"y" as in "you."

An *apostrophe*, when immediately preceding or following a vowel, I employ to denote the place of a letter which has no equivalent in our alphabet: it has a guttural sound, like that which is heard in the bleating of sheep.

The vowel "a" with a *dot* beneath (a) represents the same sound when it is more forcibly pronounced.

Each of the *consonants* distinguished by a *dot* beneath has a peculiarly hard sound. The distinction of these

* Here I must mention, that I have written "Básha" instead of "Páshá" in conformity with the pronunciation of the Egyptians.

† Strictly speaking, it has a sound between that of "a" in "bad" and that of "u" in "bud;" sometimes approximating more to the former, and sometimes to the latter.

‡ Its sound, however, often approximates to that of "a" in "ball."

letters is of great importance to Arabic scholars, and to travellers in Egypt.*

The usual sign of a *diæresis* I sometimes employ to show that a final “e” is not mute, but pronounced as that letter, when unaccented, in the beginning or middle of a word.

Having avoided as much as possible marking the *accentuation* in Arabic words, I must request the reader to bear in mind, not only that a single vowel, when not marked with an accent, is always short; but that a double vowel, or diphthong, at the end of a word, when not so marked, is not accented (“Welee,” for instance, being pronounced “Wē’lee,” or “Wel’ee”): also, that the accents do not always denote the principal or only emphasis (“Sháweesh” being pronounced “Shá-wee’sh”); and that “dh,” “gh,” “kh,” “sh,” and “th,” when not divided by a hyphen, represent, each, a single Arabic letter.

As some readers may observe that many Arabic words are written differently in this work and in my translation of ‘The Thousand and One Nights,’ it is necessary to add, that in the present case I write such words agreeably with the general pronunciation of the educated classes in Cairo. For the same reason I often use the same European character to express two Arabic letters which in Egypt are pronounced alike.

E. W. L.

May, 1842.

* “Dh” is pronounced as “th” in “that:”—“g,” generally as in “give;” but in some parts of Egypt, as in “gem,” or nearly so:—“gh” represents a guttural sound, like that produced in gargling:—“h” is a very strong aspirate:—“k” has properly a guttural sound (most of the people of Cairo, and those of some provinces, cannot pronounce it, and substitute for it an *hiatus*; while in Upper Egypt the sound of “g” in “give” is used in its stead):—“kh” represents a guttural sound like that which is produced in expelling saliva from the throat, and approaching nearer to the sound of “h” than to that of “k:”—“sh” is pronounced as in “shall:” and “th” as in “thin.”

P R E F A C E.

Cairo, 1835.

DURING a former visit to this country, undertaken chiefly for the purpose of studying the Arabic language in its most famous school, I devoted much of my attention to the manners and customs of the Arab inhabitants; and in an intercourse of two years and a half with this people, soon found that all the information which I had previously been able to obtain respecting them was insufficient to be of much use to the student of Arabic literature, or to satisfy the curiosity of the general reader. Hence I was induced to cover some quires of paper with notes on the most remarkable of their usages, partly for my own benefit, and partly in the hope that I might have it in my power to make some of my countrymen better acquainted with the domiciliated classes of one of the most interesting nations of the world, by drawing a detailed picture of the inhabitants of the largest Arab city. The period of my first visit to this country did not, however, suffice for the accomplishment of this object, and for the prosecution of my other studies; and I relinquished the idea of publishing the notes which I had made on the modern inhabitants: but, five years after my return to England, those notes were shown to some members of the Committee of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, at whose suggestion, the Committee, interested with the subjects of them, and with the novelty of some of their contents, engaged me to complete and print them. Encouraged by their approbation, and relying upon their judgment, I immediately determined to follow their advice, and, by the earliest opportunity, again departed to Egypt. After

another residence of more than a year in the metropolis of this country, and half a year in Upper Egypt, I have now accomplished, as well as I am able, the task proposed to me.*

It may be said, that the English reader already possesses an excellent and ample description of Arab manners and customs in Dr. Russell's account of the people of Aleppo. I will not forfeit my own claim to the reputation of an honest writer, by attempting to detract from the just merits of that valuable and interesting work; but must assert that it is, upon the whole, rather an account of *Turkish* than of *Arab* manners; and that neither the original Author, nor his brother, to whom we are indebted for the enlarged and much improved edition, was sufficiently acquainted with the Arabic language to scrutinize some of the most interesting subjects of inquiry which the plan of the work required them to treat: nor would their well-known station in Aleppo, or perhaps their national feelings, allow them to assume those disguises which were necessary to enable them to become familiar with many of the most remarkable religious ceremonies, opinions, and superstitions of the people whom they have described. Deficiencies in their remarks on these subjects are the only faults of any importance that I can discover in their excellent and learned work.†

* It gives me great pleasure to find, that, while I have been attempting to preserve memorials of the manners and customs of the most polished modern Arab people, one of my learned friends (M. Fulgence Fresnel) has been occupied, with eminent success, in rescuing from oblivion many interesting notices of the history of the *early* Arabs, and that another (Mr. [now, Sir Gardner] Wilkinson) has been preparing to impart to us an account of the private life, manners, &c., of the Ancient Egyptians. [The very high and just commendation which the works of these two authors (published since the above was written) have obtained from eminent critics, renders it needless for me to add my humble testimony to their merits.]

† Among the memoirs in "the great French work" on Egypt, is one entitled 'Essai sur les mœurs des habitans modernes de l'Égypte;' but its author appears to me to have fallen into an error of considerable magnitude, in applying to the Egyptians in general, observations which were, in truth, for the most part descriptive of the manners and customs of their naturalized rulers, the Memlooks. It is probable that the Egyptians in some degree imitated, when they were able to do so, the habits and customs of this class: I may, however, venture to affirm, that the essay here alluded to does not convey a true notion of their *present* moral and

I have been differently circumstanced. Previously to my first visit to this country, I acquired some knowledge of the language and literature of the Arabs; and in a year after my first arrival here, I was able to converse with the people among whom I was residing, with tolerable ease. I have associated, almost exclusively, with Muslims, of various ranks in society: I have lived as they live, conforming with their general habits; and, in order to make them familiar and unreserved towards me on every subject, have always avowed my agreement with them in opinion whenever my conscience would allow me, and in most other cases refrained from the expression of my dissent, as well as from every action which might give them disgust; abstaining from eating food forbidden by their religion, and drinking wine, &c.; and even from habits merely disagreeable to them; such as the use of knives and forks at meals. Having made myself acquainted with all their common religious ceremonies, I have been able to escape exciting, in strangers, any suspicion of my being a person who had no right to intrude among them, whenever it was necessary for me to witness

social state. Its author, moreover, shows himself to have been often extremely careless both in his observations and inquiries: this is particularly evident in his singular misstatement of the correspondence of French and Mohammedan hours, and in the first two pages (in the 8vo. edition) of the section on public fêtes. He has given many just philosophical observations; but these occupy too large a proportion of a memoir scarcely exceeding one-third of the extent of the present work. To show that these remarks are not made in an invidious spirit, I most willingly express my high admiration of other parts of "the great work" (especially the contributions of M. Jomard), relating to subjects which have alike employed my mind and pen, and upon which I shall probably publish my observations. — Burckhardt's 'Arabic Proverbs,' and their illustrations, convey many notions of remarkable customs and traits of character of the modern Egyptians; but are very far from composing a complete exposition, or, in every case, a true one; for national proverbs are bad tests of the morality of a people. — There is one work, however, which presents most admirable pictures of the manners and customs of the Arabs, and particularly of those of the Egyptians; it is 'The Thousand and One Nights; or, Arabian Nights' Entertainments:' if the English reader had possessed a close translation of it with sufficient illustrative notes, I might almost have spared myself the labour of the present undertaking. — [This remark, respecting 'The Thousand and One Nights,' was, I believe, the cause of my being employed, since the publication of the first edition of the present work, to translate those admirable tales, and to illustrate them by explanatory notes.]

any Muslim rite or festival. While, from the dress which I have found most convenient to wear, I am generally mistaken, in public, for a Turk, my acquaintances, of course, know me to be an Englishman ; but I constrain them to treat me as a Muslim, by my freely acknowledging the hand of Providence in the introduction and diffusion of the religion of El-Islám, and, when interrogated, avowing my belief in the Messiah, in accordance with the *words* of the Kur-án, as the Word of God infused into the womb of the Virgin Mary, and a spirit proceeding from Him. Thus, I believe, I have acquired their good opinion, and much of their confidence ; though not to such an extent as to prevent my having to contend with many difficulties. The Muslims are very averse from giving information on subjects connected with their religion or superstitions to persons whom they suspect of differing from them in sentiments ; but very ready to talk on such subjects with those whom they think acquainted with them : hence I have generally obtained some slight knowledge of matters, difficult for me thoroughly to learn, from one of the most lax, and of the least instructed, of my friends ; so as to be able to draw into conversation, upon the desired topics, persons of better information ; and by this mode I have invariably succeeded in overcoming their scruples. I have had two professors of Arabic and of Muslim religion and law as my regular, salaried tutors ; and, by submitting to them questions on any matters respecting which I was in doubt, have authenticated or corrected, and added to, the information derived from conversation with my other friends. Occasionally, also, I have applied to higher authorities ; having the happiness to number among my friends in this city some persons of the highest attainments in Eastern learning.

Perhaps the reader may not be displeased if I here attempt to acquaint him more particularly with one of my Muslim friends, the first of those above alluded to ; and to show, at the same time, the light in which he, like others of his country, regards me in my present situation. The sheykh Ahmad (or seyyid Ahmad ; for he is one of

the numerous class of "shereefs," or descendants of the Prophet) is somewhat more than forty years of age, by his own confession; but appears more near to fifty. He is as remarkable in physiognomy as in character. His stature is under the middle size: his beard reddish, and now becoming grey. For many years he has been nearly blind: one of his eyes is almost entirely closed; and both are ornamented on particular occasions (at least on the two grand annual festivals) with a border of the black pigment called "kohl," which is seldom used but by women. He boasts his descent not only from the Prophet, but also from a very celebrated saint, Esh-Shaará-wee;* and his complexion, which is very fair, supports his assertion that his ancestors, for several generations, lived in the north-western parts of Africa. He obtains his subsistence from a slender patrimony, and by exercising the trade of a bookseller. Partly to profit in this occupation, and partly for the sake of society, or at least to enjoy some tobacco and coffee, he is a visitor in my house almost every evening.

For several years before he adopted the trade of a bookseller, which was that of his father, he pursued no other occupation than that of performing in the religious ceremonies called "zikrs;" which consist in the repetition of the name and attributes, &c. of God, by a number of persons, in chorus; and in such performances he is still often employed. He was then a member of the order of the Saadeeyeh darweeshes, who are particularly famous for devouring live serpents; and he is said to have been one of the serpent-eaters: but he did not confine himself to food so easily digested. One night, during a meeting of a party of darweeshes of his order, at which their Sheykh was present, my friend became affected with religious frenzy, seized a tall glass shade which surrounded a candle placed on the floor, and ate a large portion of it. The Sheykh and the other darweeshes, looking at him with astonishment, upbraided him with having broken the institutes of his order; since the eating of glass was not

* Thus commonly pronounced, for Esh-Shaaránee.

among the miracles which they were allowed to perform ; and they immediately expelled him. He then entered the order of the Ahmedeeyeh ; and as they, likewise, never ate glass, he determined not to do so again. However, soon after, at a meeting of some brethren of this order, when several Saadeeyeh also were present, he again was seized with frenzy, and, jumping up to a chandelier, caught hold of one of the small glass lamps attached to it, and devoured about half of it, swallowing also the oil and water which it contained. He was conducted before his Sheykh, to be tried for this offence ; but on his taking an oath never to eat glass again, he was neither punished nor expelled the order. Notwithstanding this oath, he soon again gratified his propensity to eat a glass lamp ; and a brother-darweesh, who was present, attempted to do the same ; but a large fragment stuck between the tongue and palate of this rash person ; and my friend had great trouble to extract it. He was again tried by his Sheykh ; and, being reproached for having broken his oath and vow of repentance, he coolly answered, “ I repent again : repentance is good : for He whose name be exalted hath said, in the Excellent Book, ‘ Verily God loveth the repentant.’ ” The Sheykh, in anger, exclaimed, “ Dost thou dare to act in this manner, and then come and cite the *Ku-rán* before me ? ”—and with this reproof, he ordered that he should be imprisoned ten days ; after which, he made him again swear to abstain from eating glass ; and on this condition he was allowed to remain a member of the Ahmedeeyeh. This second oath he professes not to have broken.—The person whose office it was to prosecute him related to me these facts ; and my friend reluctantly confessed them to be true.

When I was first acquainted with the sheykh Ahmad, he had long been content with one wife ; but now he has indulged himself with a second,* who continues to live in her parents’ house : yet he has taken care to assure me that he is not rich enough to refuse my yearly present of a dress. On my visiting him for the second

* He professes to have had more than thirty wives in the course of his life ; but, in saying so, I believe he greatly exaggerates.

time during my present residence in this place, his mother came to the door of the room in which I was sitting with him, to complain to me of his conduct in taking this new wife. Putting her hand within the door, to give greater effect to her words by proper action (or perhaps to show how beautifully the palm, and the tips of the fingers, glowed with the fresh red dye of the "henna"), but concealing the rest of her person, she commenced a most energetic appeal to my sympathy.—“O Efendee!” she exclaimed, “I throw myself upon thy mercy! I kiss thy feet! I have no hope but in God and thee!” “What words are these, my mistress?” said I: “what misfortune hath befallen thee? and what can I do for thee? Tell me.” “This son of mine,” she continued, “this my son Ahmad is a worthless fellow; he has a wife here, a good creature, with whom he has lived happily, with God’s blessing, for sixteen years; and now he has neglected her and me, and given himself up to a second wife, a young, impudent wench: he lavishes his money upon this monkey, and others like her, and upon her father and mother and uncles and brother and brother’s children, and I know not whom besides, and abridges us, that is, myself and his first wife, of the comforts to which we were before accustomed. By the Prophet! and by thy dear head! I speak truth. I kiss thy feet, and beg thee to insist upon his divorcing his new wife.”—The poor man looked a little foolish while his mother was thus addressing me from behind the door; and as soon as she was gone, promised to do what she desired. “But,” said he, “it is a difficult case. I was in the habit of sleeping occasionally in the house of the brother of the girl whom I have lately taken as my wife: he is a clerk in the employ of ‘Abbás Básha; and, rather more than a year ago, ‘Abbás Básha sent for me, and said, ‘I hear that you are often sleeping in the house of my clerk Moḥammad. Why do you act so? Do you not know that it is very improper, when there are women in the house?’ I said, ‘I am going to marry his sister.’ ‘Then why have you not married her already?’ asked

the Básha. ‘She is only nine years of age.’ ‘Is the marriage contract made?’ ‘No.’ ‘Why not?’ ‘I cannot afford, at present, to give the dowry.’ ‘What is the dowry to be?’ ‘Ninety piasters.’ ‘Here, then,’ said the Básha, ‘take the money, and let the contract be concluded immediately.’ So you see I was obliged to marry the girl; and I am afraid that the Básha will be angry if I divorce her: but I will act in such a manner that her brother shall insist upon the divorce; and then, please God, I shall live in peace again.”—This is a good example of the comfort of having two wives.

A short time since, upon his offering me a copy of the *Kur-án*, for sale, he thought it necessary to make some excuse for doing so. He remarked that by my conforming with many of the ceremonies of the Muslims, I tacitly professed myself to be one of them; and that it was incumbent upon him to regard me in the most favourable light, which he was the more willing to do because he knew that I should incur the displeasure of my king by making an open profession of the faith of *El-Islám*, and therefore could not do it.* “You give me,” said he, “the salutation of ‘Peace be on you!’ and it would be impious in me, being directly forbidden by my religion, to pronounce you an unbeliever; for God, whose name be exalted, hath said, ‘Say not unto him who greeteth thee with peace, Thou art not a believer:’† therefore,” he added, “it is no sin in me to put into your hands the noble *Kur-án*: but there are some of your countrymen who will take it in unclean hands, and even sit upon it! I beg God’s forgiveness for talking of such a thing: far be it from you to do so; you, praise be to God, know and observe the command, ‘None shall touch it but they who are purified.’”‡—He once sold a copy of the *Kur-án*, on my application, to a countryman of mine, who, being

* It is a common belief among the Egyptians, that every European traveller who visits their country is an emissary from his king; and it is difficult to convince them that this is not the case: so strange to them is the idea of a man’s incurring great trouble and expense for the purpose of acquiring the knowledge of foreign countries and nations.

† *Kur-án*, chap. iv. ver. 96.

‡ *Kur-án*, chap. lvi. ver. 78.

disturbed, just as the bargain was concluded, by some person entering the room, hastily put the sacred book upon the seat, and under a part of his dress, to conceal it. The bookseller was much scandalized by this action; thinking that my friend was sitting upon the book, and that he was doing so to show his contempt of it: he declares his belief that he has been heavily punished by God for this unlawful sale.—There was only one thing that I had much difficulty in persuading him to do during my former visit to this country; which was, to go with me, at a particular period, into the mosque of the Hasaneyn, the reputed burial-place of the head of El-Hoseyn, and the most sacred of the mosques in the Egyptian metropolis. On my passing with him before one of the entrances of this building, one afternoon during the fast of Ramadán, when it was crowded with Turks, and many of the principal people of the city were among the congregation, I thought it a good opportunity to see it to the greatest advantage, and asked my companion to go in with me. He positively refused, in the fear of my being discovered to be an Englishman, which might so rouse the fanatic anger of some of the Turks there, as to expose me to some act of violence. I therefore entered alone. He remained at the door, following me with his eye only (or his only eye), and wondering at my audacity; but as soon as he saw me acquit myself in the usual manner, by walking round the bronze screen which surrounds the monument over the spot where the head of the martyr is said to be buried, and then putting myself into the regular postures of prayer, he came in, and said his prayers by my side.

After relating these anecdotes, I should mention that the characters of my other acquaintances here are not marked by similar eccentricities. My attentions to my visitors have been generally confined to the common usages of Eastern hospitality; supplying them with pipes and coffee, and welcoming them to a share of my dinner or supper. Many of their communications I have written in Arabic, at their dictation, and since translated, and inserted in the following pages. What I have principally

aimed at, in this work, is correctness ; and I do not scruple to assert that I am not conscious of having endeavoured to render interesting any matter that I have related by the slightest sacrifice of truth.

P. S. With regard to the engravings which accompany this work, I should mention that they are from drawings which I have made, not to embellish the pages, but merely to explain the text.

THE
MANNERS AND CUSTOMS
OF THE
MODERN EGYPTIANS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE COUNTRY AND CLIMATE—METROPOLIS—HOUSES—
POPULATION.

It is generally observed that many of the most remarkable peculiarities in the manners, customs, and character of a nation are attributable to the physical peculiarities of the country. Such causes, in an especial manner, affect the moral and social state of the modern Egyptians, and therefore here require some preliminary notice; but it will not as yet be necessary to explain their particular influences: these will be evinced in many subsequent parts of the present work.

The Nile, in its course through the narrow and winding valley of Upper Egypt, which is confined on each side by mountainous and sandy deserts, as well as through the plain of Lower Egypt, is everywhere bordered, excepting in a very few places, by cultivated fields of its own formation. These cultivated tracts are not perfectly level, being somewhat lower towards the deserts than in the neighbourhood of the river. They are interspersed with palm-groves and villages, and intersected by numerous canals. The copious summer rains which prevail in Abyssinia and the neighbouring countries begin to show their effects in Egypt, by the rising of the Nile, about

the period of the summer solstice. By the autumnal equinox, the river attains its greatest height, which is always sufficient to fill the canals by which the fields are irrigated, and, generally, to inundate large portions of the cultivable land : it then gradually falls until the period when it again begins to rise. Being impregnated, particularly during its rise, with rich soil washed down from the mountainous countries whence it flows, a copious deposit is annually spread, either by the natural inundation or by artificial irrigation, over the fields which border it ; while its bed, from the same cause, rises in an equal degree. The Egyptians depend entirely upon their river for the fertilization of the soil, rain being a very rare phenomenon in their country, excepting in the neighbourhood of the Mediterranean ; and as the seasons are perfectly regular, the peasant may make his arrangements with the utmost precision respecting the labour he will have to perform. Sometimes his labour is light ; but when it consists in raising water for irrigation, it is excessively severe.

The climate of Egypt, during the greater part of the year, is remarkably salubrious. The exhalations from the soil after the period of the inundation render the latter part of the autumn less healthy than the summer and winter ; and cause ophthalmia and dysentery, and some other diseases, to be more prevalent then than at other seasons ; and during a period of somewhat more or less than fifty days (called “*el-khamáseen*”*), commencing in April, and lasting throughout May, hot southerly winds occasionally prevail for about three days together. These winds, though they seldom cause the thermometer of Fahrenheit to rise above 95° in Lower Egypt, or in Upper Egypt, 105°,† are dreadfully oppressive, even to the natives. When the plague visits Egypt, it is generally in the spring ; and this disease is most severe in the period of the *khamáseen*. Egypt is also subject, parti-

* Respecting this term, see the first of the notes in Chapter XXVI.

† This is the temperature in the shade. At Thebes, I have observed the thermometer to rise above 110° during a *khamáseen* wind, in the shade.

cularly during the spring and summer, to the hot wind called the "samoom," which is still more oppressive than the khamáseen winds, but of much shorter duration, seldom lasting longer than a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes. It generally proceeds from the south-east or south-south-east, and carries with it clouds of dust and sand. The general height of the thermometer in the depth of winter in Lower Egypt, in the afternoon and in the shade, is from 50° to 60° : in the hottest season it is from 90° to 100° ; and about ten degrees higher in the southern parts of Upper Egypt. But though the summer heat is so great, it is seldom very oppressive; being generally accompanied by a refreshing northerly breeze, and the air being extremely dry. There is, however, one great source of discomfort arising from this dryness, namely, an excessive quantity of dust; and there are other plagues which very much detract from the comfort which the natives of Egypt, and visitors to their country, otherwise derive from its genial climate. In spring, summer, and autumn, flies are so abundant as to be extremely annoying during the daytime, and mosquitoes are troublesome at night (unless a curtain be made use of to keep them away), and sometimes even in the day; and every house that contains much woodwork (as most of the better houses do) swarms with bugs during the warm weather. Lice are not always to be avoided in any season, but they are easily got rid of; and in the cooler weather fleas are excessively numerous.

The climate of Upper Egypt is more healthy, though hotter, than that of Lower Egypt. The plague seldom ascends far above Cairo, the metropolis; and is most common in the marshy parts of the country near the Mediterranean. During the last ten years, the country having been better drained, and quarantine regulations adopted to prevent or guard against the introduction of this disease from other countries, very few plague-cases have occurred, excepting in the parts above mentioned, and in those parts the pestilence has not been severe.*

* This remark was written before the terrible plague of the present year [1835], which was certainly introduced from Turkey, and extended

Ophthalmia is also more common in Lower Egypt than in the southern parts. It generally arises from checked perspiration; but is aggravated by the dust and many other causes. When remedies are promptly employed, this disease is seldom alarming in its progress; but vast numbers of the natives of Egypt, not knowing how to treat it, or obstinately resigning themselves to fate, are deprived of the sight of one or both of their eyes.

When questioned respecting the salubrity of Egypt, I have often been asked whether many aged persons are seen among the inhabitants: few, certainly, attain a great age in this country; but how few do, in our own land, without more than once suffering from an illness that would prove fatal without medical aid, which is obtained by a very small number in Egypt! The heat of the summer months is sufficiently oppressive to occasion considerable lassitude, while, at the same time, it excites the Egyptian to intemperance in sensual enjoyments; and the exuberant fertility of the soil engenders indolence, little nourishment sufficing for the natives, and the sufficiency being procurable without much exertion.

The modern Egyptian metropolis, to the inhabitants of which most of the contents of the following pages relate, is now called “Maṣr*” more properly, “Miṣr;” but was formerly named “El-Kāhireh;” whence Europeans have formed the name of *Cairo*. It is situated at the entrance of the valley of Upper Egypt, midway between the Nile and the eastern mountain range of Muḳaṭṭam. Between it and the river there intervenes a tract of land, for the most part cultivated, which, in the northern parts (where the port of Boolāk is situated), is

throughout the whole of Egypt, though its ravages were not great in the southern parts. It has destroyed not less than eighty thousand persons in Cairo, that is, one-third of the population; and far more, I believe, than two hundred thousand in all Egypt. According to a report made by the government, the victims of this plague in Cairo were about *forty* thousand; but I have been informed, on high authority, that the government made it a rule to report only half the number of deaths in this case.

* This is the name by which the modern Egyptians call their country, as well as its metropolis.

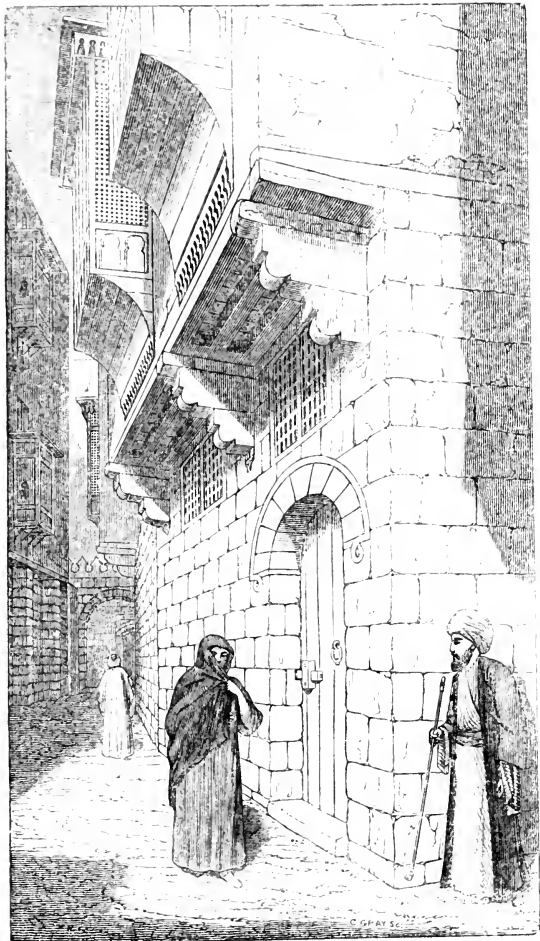
more than a mile in width, and, at the southern part, less than half a mile wide. The metropolis occupies a space equal to about three square miles; and its population is about two hundred and forty thousand. It is surrounded by a wall, the gates of which are shut at night, and is commanded by a large citadel, situated at an angle of the town, near a point of the mountain. The streets are unpaved; and most of them are narrow and irregular: they might more properly be called lanes.

By a stranger who merely passed through the streets, Cairo would be regarded as a very close and crowded city; but that this is not the case is evident to a person who overlooks the town from the top of a lofty house, or from the menaret of a mosque. The great thoroughfares have generally a row of shops along each side.* Above the shops are apartments which do not communicate with them, and which are seldom occupied by the persons who rent the shops. To the right and left of the great thoroughfares are by-streets and quarters. Most of the by-streets are thoroughfares, and have a large wooden gate at each end, closed at night, and kept by a porter within, who opens to any persons requiring to be admitted. The quarters mostly consist of several narrow lanes, having but one general entrance, with a gate, which is also closed at night; but several have a by-street passing through them.

Of the private houses of the metropolis it is particularly necessary that I should give a description. The accompanying engraving will serve to give a general notion of their exterior. The foundation walls, to the height of the first floor, are cased externally, and often internally, with the soft calcareous stone of the neighbouring mountain. The surface of the stone, when newly cut, is of a light yellowish hue; but its colour soon darkens. The alternate courses of the front are sometimes coloured red and white,† particularly in large houses; as is the

* Views of shops in Cairo will be found in a subsequent Chapter.

† With red ochre and lime-wash.



Private Houses in Cairo.

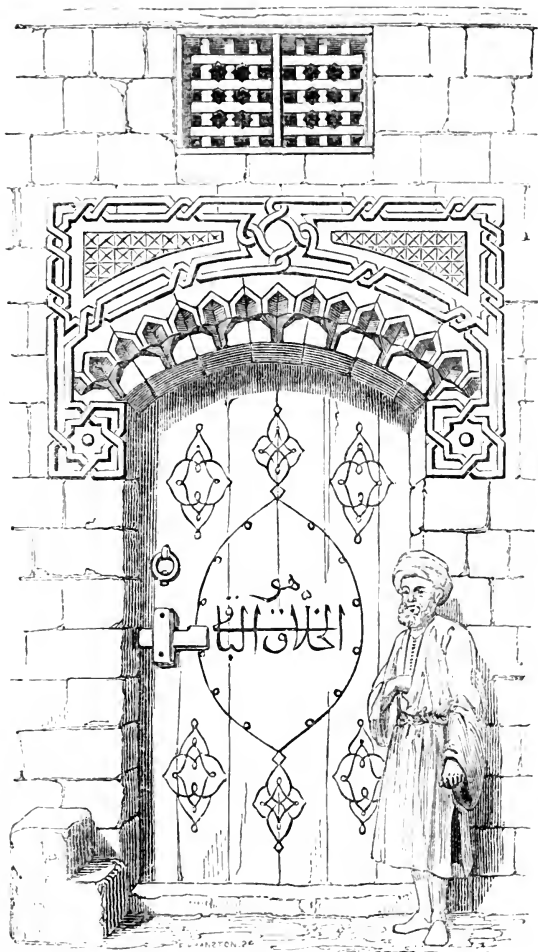
case with most mosques.* The superstructure, the front of which generally projects about two feet, and is supported by corbels or piers, is of brick, and often plastered. The bricks are burnt, and of a dull red colour. The mortar is generally composed of mud in the proportion of one-half, with a fourth part of lime, and the remaining part of the ashes of straw and rubbish. Hence the unplastered walls of brick are of a dirty colour, as if the bricks were unburnt. The roof is flat, and covered with a coat of plaster.

The most usual architectural style of the entrance of a private house in Cairo is shown by the sketch opposite.† The door is often ornamented in the manner represented in the next page: the compartment in which is the inscription, and the other similarly shaped compartments, are painted red, bordered with white; the rest of the surface of the door is painted green. The inscription “He (*i. e.* God) is the excellent Creator, the Everlasting” (the object of which will be explained when I treat of the superstitions of the Egyptians), is seen on many doors; but is far from being general: it is usually painted in black or white characters. Few doors but those of large houses are painted. They generally have an iron knocker and a wooden lock; and there is usually a mounting-stone by the side.

The ground-floor apartments next the street have small wooden grated windows, placed sufficiently high to render it impossible for a person passing by in the street, even on horseback, to see through them. The windows of the upper apartments generally project a foot and a half, or more, and are mostly formed of turned wooden lattice-work, which is so close that it shuts out much of the light and sun, and screens the inmates of the house from the view of persons without, while at the

* This mode of decorating the houses has lately become more general, in consequence of an order of the government, whereby the inhabitants were required thus to honour the arrival of Ibrâheem Bâsha from Syria.

† The street in the view is wider than usual. The projecting windows on opposite sides of a street often nearly meet each other; almost entirely excluding the sun, and thus producing an agreeable coolness in the summer months.

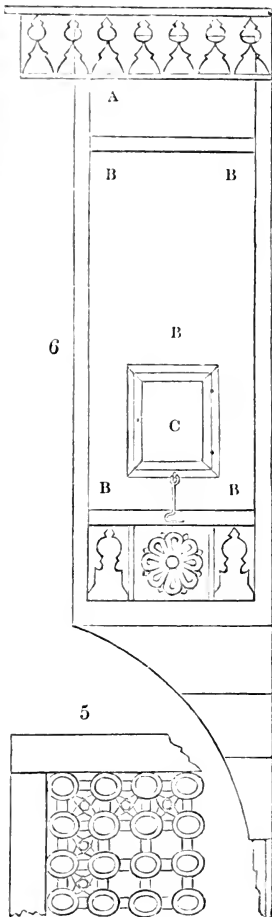
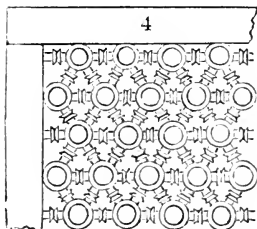
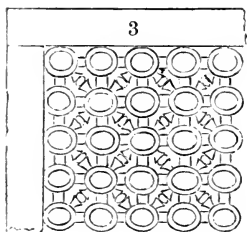
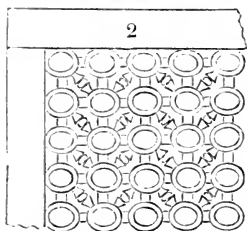
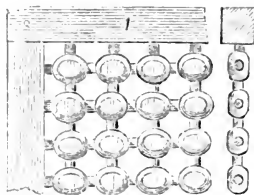


Door of a Private House.

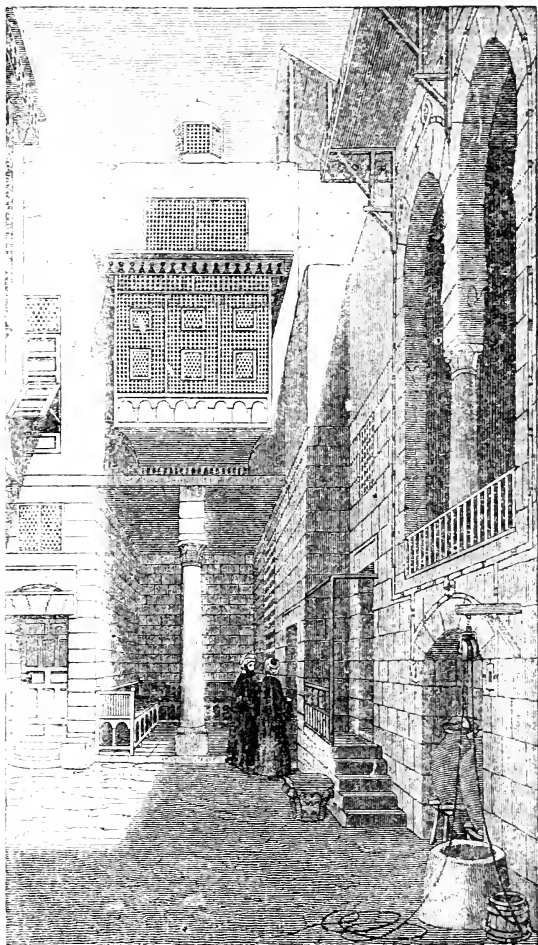
same time it admits the air. They are generally of unpainted wood; but some few are partially painted red and green, and some are entirely painted. A window of this kind is called a "róshan," or, more commonly, a "meshrebeeyeh," which latter word has another application that will be mentioned below. Several windows of different descriptions are represented in some of the illustrations of this work; and sketches of the most common patterns of the lattice-work, on a larger scale, are given in the next page.* Sometimes a window of the kind above described has a little meshrebeeyeh, which somewhat resembles a róshan in miniature, projecting from the front, or from each side. In this, in order to be exposed to a current of air, are placed porous earthen bottles, which are used for cooling water by evaporation. Hence the name of "meshrebeeyeh," which signifies "a place for drink," or "—for drinking." The projecting window has a flat one of lattice-work, or of grating of wood, or of coloured glass, immediately above it. This upper window, if of lattice-work, is often of a more fanciful construction than the others; exhibiting a representation of a basin with a ewer above it, or the figure of a lion, or the name of "Allah," or the words "God is my hope," &c. Some projecting windows are wholly constructed of boards; and a few have frames of glass in the sides. In the better houses, also, the windows of lattice-work are now generally furnished with frames of glass in the inside, which in the winter are wholly closed; for a penetrating cold is felt in Egypt when the thermometer of Fahrenheit is below 60°. The windows of inferior houses are mostly of a different kind, being even with the exterior surface of the wall: the upper part is of wooden lattice-work,† or grating; and the lower, closed by hanging shutters;

* No. 1 is a view and section of a portion of the most simple kind. This and the other four kinds are here represented on a scale of about one-seventh of the real size. No. 6 shows the general proportions of the side of a projecting window. The portion A is, in most instances, of lattice-work similar to No. 1, and comprises about twelve rows of beads in the width: the portion B is commonly either of the same kind, or like No. 2 or No. 3; and the small lattice C, which is attached by hinges, is generally similar to No. 4.

† Commonly similar to No. 1 or No. 5.



Specimens of Lattice-work.—From the centre of one row of beads to that of the next (in these specimens) is between an inch and a quarter and an inch and three-quarters.



Court of a Private House in Cairo.

but many of these have a little meshrebeeyeh for the water-bottles projecting from the lower part.

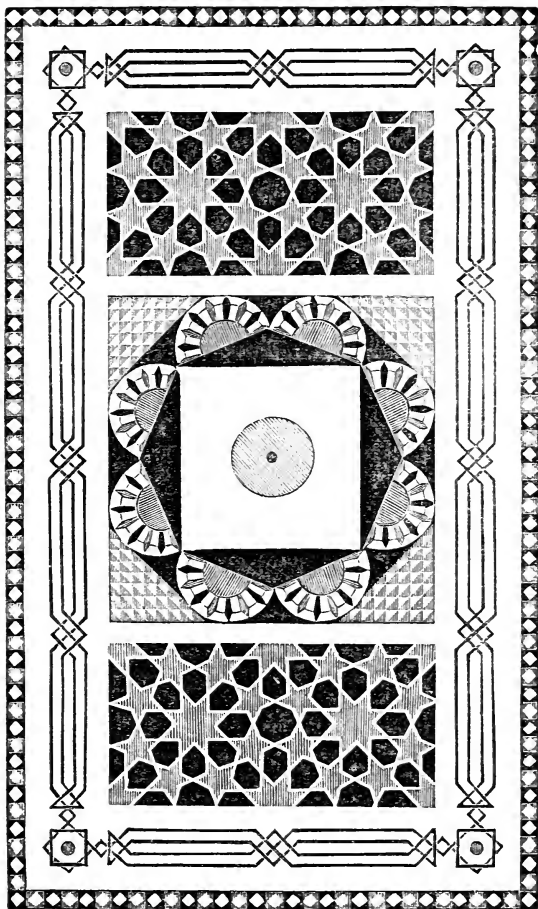
The houses in general are two or three stories high ; and almost every house that is sufficiently large encloses an open, unpaved court, called a "hósh," which is entered by a passage that is constructed with one or two turnings, for the purpose of preventing passengers in the street from seeing into it. In this passage, just within the door, there is a long stone seat, called "maṣṭab'ah," built against the back or side wall, for the porter and other servants. In the court is a well of slightly brackish water, which filters through the soil from the Nile ; and on its most shaded side are, commonly, two water-jars, which are daily replenished with water of the Nile, brought from the river in skins.* The principal apartments look into the court ; and their exterior walls (those which are of brick) are plastered and whitewashed. There are several doors which are entered from the court. One of these is called "báb el-hareem," (the door of the hareem): it is the entrance of the stairs which lead to the apartments appropriated exclusively to the women and their master and his children.†

In general, there is, on the ground-floor, an apartment called a "mandar'ah," in which male visitors are received. This has a wide, wooden, grated window, or two windows of this kind, next the court. A small part of the floor, extending from the door to the opposite side of the room, is six or seven inches lower than the rest ; this part is called the "durká'ah"‡ In a handsome house, the durká'ah of the mandar'ah is paved with white and black marble, and little pieces of fine red tile, inlaid in complicated and tasteful patterns, and has in the centre a fountain (called "faskeeyeh") which plays into a small, shallow pool, lined with coloured marbles, &c., like the surrounding pavement. I give, as a specimen, the pattern of the pavement of a

* Some large houses have two courts : the inner for the hareem ; and in the latter, or both of these, there is usually a little enclosure of arched wood-work, in which trees and flowers are raised.

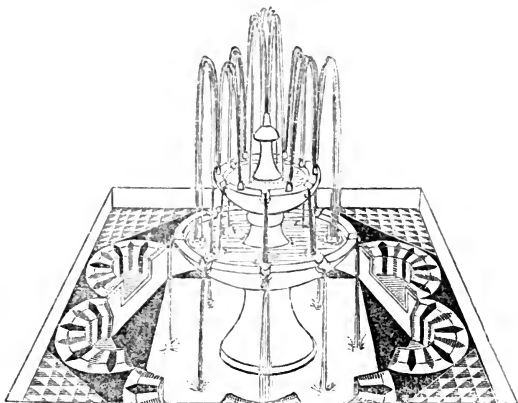
† In the accompanying view of the court of a house, the door of the hareem is that which faces the spectator.

‡ Apparently a corruption of the Persian "dargáh."—The view of a ká'ah in p. 40 will serve to illustrate the description of the mandar'ah.



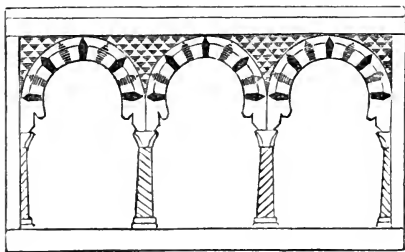
Pavement of a "Durkâ'ah."—The width of this is about eight feet.

durká'ah, such as I have above described, and a sketch of the fountain. The water which falls from the foun-



Fountain.

tain is drained off from the pool by a pipe. There is generally, fronting the door, at the end of the durká'ah, a shelf of marble or of common stone, about four feet



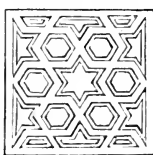
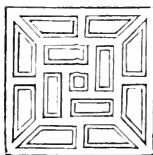
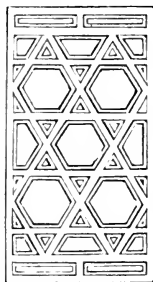
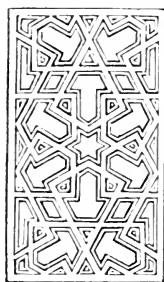
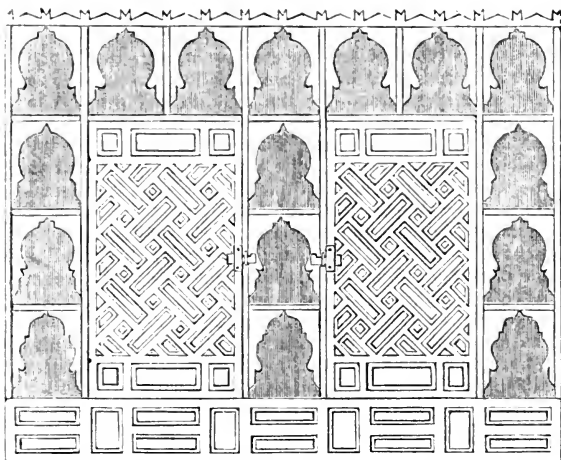
Şuffeh.

high, called a "şuffeh," supported by two or more arches, or by a single arch, under which are placed

utensils in ordinary use—such as perfuming vessels, and the basin and ewer which are used for washing before and after meals, and for the ablution preparatory to prayer: water-bottles, coffee-cups, &c. are placed upon the *suffeh*. In handsome houses, the arches of the *suffeh* are faced with marble and tile, like the pool of the fountain represented in the sketch above; and sometimes the wall over it, to the height of about four feet or more, is also cased with similar materials; partly with large upright slabs, and partly with small pieces, like the *durka'ah*. The raised part of the floor of the room is called “*leewán*”* (a corruption of “*el-eewán*,” which signifies “any raised place to sit upon,” and also “a palace”). Every person slips off his shoes on the *durka'ah* before he steps upon the *leewán*.† The latter is generally paved with common stone, and covered with a mat in summer, and a carpet over the mat in winter; and has a mattress and cushions placed against each of its three walls, composing what is called a “*deewán*,” or *divan*. The mattress, which is generally about three feet wide and three or four inches thick, is placed either on the ground or on a raised frame; and the cushions, which are usually of a length equal to the width of the mattress, and of a height equal to half that measure, lean against the wall. Both mattresses and cushions are stuffed with cotton, and are covered with printed calico, cloth, or some more expensive stuff. The walls are plastered and whitewashed. There are generally in the walls two or three shallow cupboards, the doors of which are composed of very small panels, on account of the heat and dryness of the climate, which cause wood to warp and shrink as if it were placed in an oven; for which reason the doors of the apartments also are constructed in the same manner. We observe great variety

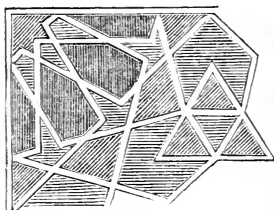
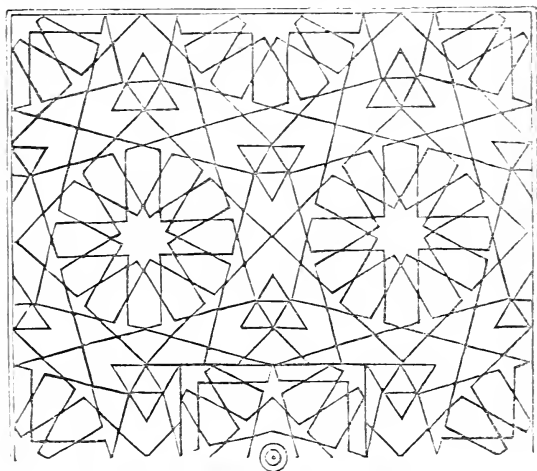
* The “*leewán*” is not to be confounded with the “*deewán*,” which is afterwards mentioned.

† One of the chief reasons of the custom here mentioned is, to avoid defiling a mat or carpet upon which prayer is usually made. This, as many authors have observed, illustrates passages of the Scriptures,—Exodus iii. 5, and Joshua v. 15.



Specimens of Panel-work.—These are represented on a scale of one inch to twenty-four or thirty.

and much ingenuity displayed in the different modes in which these small panels are formed and disposed. A few specimens are introduced opposite. The ceiling over the leewán is of wood, with carved beams, generally



Blue

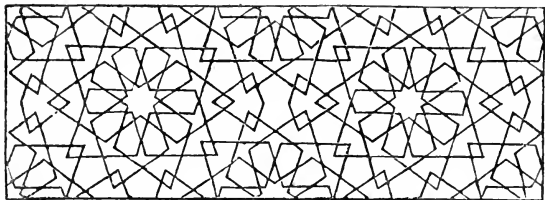
Green

Red

Ceiling of a Durk'ah.—About eight feet wide.

about a foot apart, partially painted, and sometimes gilt. But that part of the ceiling which is over the durk'ah, in a handsome house, is usually more richly decorated:

here, instead of beams, numerous thin strips of wood are nailed upon the planks, forming patterns curiously complicated, yet perfectly regular, and having a highly ornamental effect. I give a sketch of the half of a ceiling thus decorated, but not in the most complicated style. The strips are painted yellow, or gilt; and the spaces within painted green, red, and blue.* In the example which I have inserted, the colours are as indicated in the sketch of a portion of the same on a larger scale, excepting in the square in the centre of the ceiling, where the strips are black, upon a yellow ground. From the centre of this square a chandelier is often suspended. There are many patterns of a similar kind; and the colours



Ceiling of a projecting Window.—The dimensions of this are about eight feet by three.

generally occupy similar places with regard to each other; but in some houses these ceilings are not painted. The ceiling of a projecting window is often ornamented in the same manner. A sketch of one is here given. Good taste is evinced by only decorating in this manner parts which are not always before the eyes; for to look long at so many lines intersecting each other in various directions would be painful.

In some houses (as in that which is the subject of the engraving in page 31) there is another room, called a "mak'ad," for the same use as the mandar'ah, having an open front, with two or more arches, and a low railing; and also, on the ground-floor, a square recess, called a

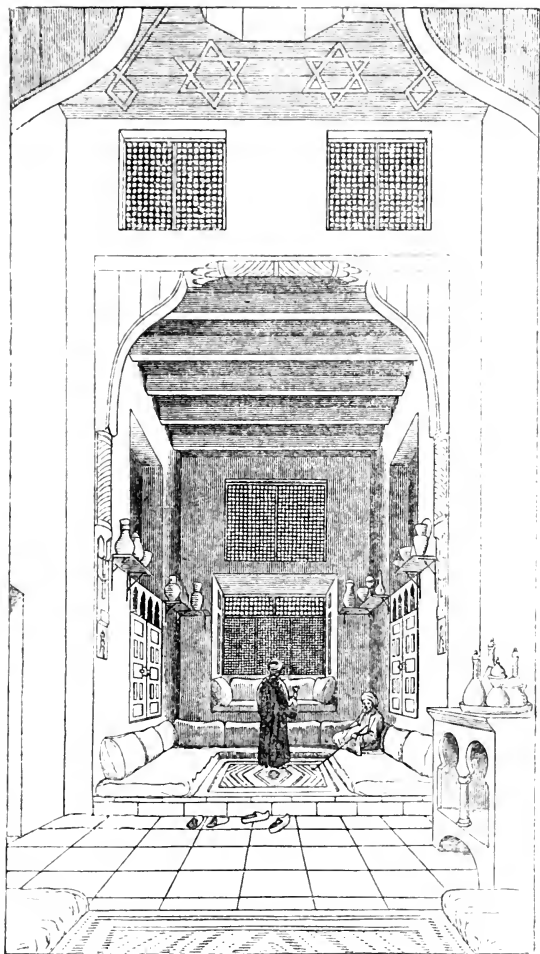
* See Jeremiah xxii. 14.

“ takhtabósh,” with an open front, and generally a pillar to support the wall above; its floor is a paved leewán, and there is a long wooden sofa placed along one, or two, or each, of its three walls. The court, during the summer, is frequently sprinkled with water, which renders the surrounding apartments agreeably cool—or at least those on the ground-floor. All the rooms are furnished in the same manner as that first described.

Among the upper apartments, or those of the Hareem, there is generally one called a “*ķá’ah*,” which is particularly lofty. It has two leewáns—one on each hand of a person entering: one of these is generally larger than the other, and is the more honourable part. A portion of the roof of this saloon, the part which is over the *durķá’ah* that divides the two leewáns, is a little elevated above the rest; and has, in the centre, a small lantern, called “*memrak*,” the sides of which are composed of lattice-work, like the windows before described, and support a cupola. The *durķá’ah* is commonly without a fountain; but is often paved in a similar manner to that of the *mandar’ah*: which the *ķá’ah* also resembles in having a handsome *suffeh*, and cupboards of curious panel-work. There is, besides, in this and some other apartments, a narrow shelf of wood, extending along two or each of the three walls which bound the leewán, about seven feet or more from the floor, just above the cupboards; but interrupted in some parts—at least in those parts where the windows are placed: upon this are arranged several vessels of china, not so much for general use as for ornament.* All the apartments are lofty, generally fourteen feet or more in height; but the *ķá’ah* is the largest and most lofty room, and in a large house it is a noble saloon.

In several of the upper rooms, in the houses of the wealthy, there are, besides the windows of lattice-work, others of coloured glass, representing bunches of flowers, peacocks, and other gay and gaudy objects, or merely

* In the larger houses, and some others, there is also, adjoining the principal saloon, an elevated closet, designed as an orchestra for female singers. A description of this will be found in the Chapter on Music.



A Ka'ah.

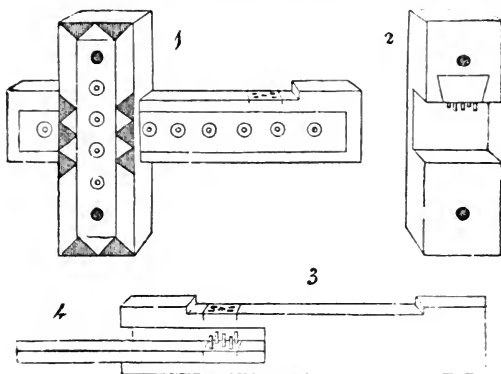
fanciful patterns, which have a pleasing effect. These coloured glass windows, which are termed “*kama-reeyehs*,”* are mostly from a foot and a half to two feet and a half in height, and from one to two feet in width; and are generally placed along the upper part of the projecting lattice-window, in a row; or above that kind of window, disposed in a group, so as to form a large square; or elsewhere in the upper parts of the walls, usually singly, or in pairs, side by side. They are composed of small pieces of glass, of various colours, set in rims of fine plaster, and enclosed in a frame of wood. On the plastered walls of some apartments are rude paintings of the temple of Mekkeh, or of the tomb of the Prophet, or of flowers and other objects, executed by native Muslim artists, who have not the least notion of the rules of perspective, and who consequently deface what they thus attempt to decorate. Sometimes also, the walls are ornamented with Arabic inscriptions, of maxims, &c., which are more usually written on paper, in an embellished style, and enclosed in glazed frames. No chambers are furnished as bed-rooms. The bed, in the day-time, is rolled up, and placed on one side, or in an adjoining closet, called “*khazneh*,” which, in the winter, is a sleeping-place: in summer, many people sleep upon the house-top. A mat, or carpet, spread upon the raised part of the stone floor, and a *deewán*, constitute the complete furniture of a room. For meals, a round tray is brought in, and placed upon a low stool, and the company sit round it on the ground. There is no fire-place:† the room is warmed when necessary, by burning charcoal in a chafing-dish. Many houses

* This word is said to be derived from “*qamar*” (the moon). Baron Hammer-Purgstall thinks (see the Vienna ‘*Jahrbücher der Literatur*,’ lxxxii. bd., pp. 71 & 72) that it has its origin from Chumaruje [or, as he is called by the Arabs in general, *Khumáraweyh*], the second prince of the Benee-Tooloon, who governed in Egypt in the end of the ninth century of the Christian era, and that it proves the art of staining glass to have been in a flourishing state in Cairo at that period.

† Excepting in the kitchen, in which are several small receptacles for fire, constructed on a kind of bench of brick. Hence, and for several other reasons (among which may be mentioned the sober and early

have, at the top, a sloping shed of boards, called a "malkaf,"* directed towards the north or north-west, to convey to a "fes-ḥah" or "fesahāh" (an open apartment) below the cool breezes which generally blow from those quarters.

Every door is furnished with a wooden lock, called a "dabbeh," the mechanism of which is shown by a



Wooden Lock.

sketch here inserted. No. 1 in this sketch is a front view of the lock, with the bolt drawn back; Nos. 2, 3, and 4, are back views of the separate parts, and the key. A number of small iron pins (four, five, or more) drop into corresponding holes in the sliding bolt, as soon as the latter is pushed into the hole or staple of the door-post. The key, also, has small pins, made to correspond

habits of the people, the general absence of draperies in the apartments, and the construction of the floors, which are of wood overlaid with stone), the destruction of a house by fire seldom happens in Cairo; but when such an accident does occur, an extensive conflagration is the usual result; for a great quantity of wood, mostly deal, and of course excessively dry, is employed in the construction of the houses.

* See again the engraving in p. 31.

with the holes, into which they are introduced to open the lock: the former pins being thus pushed up, the bolt may be drawn back. The wooden lock of a street-door is commonly about fourteen inches long:* those of the doors of apartments, cupboards, &c. are about seven, or eight, or nine inches. The locks of the gates of quarters, public buildings, &c. are of the same kind, and mostly two feet, or even more, in length. It is not difficult to pick this kind of lock.

In the plan of almost every house there is an utter want of regularity. The apartments are generally of different heights—so that a person has to ascend or descend one, two, or more steps, to pass from one chamber to another adjoining it. The principal aim of the architect is to render the house as private as possible; particularly that part of it which is inhabited by the women; and not to make any window in such a situation as to overlook the apartments of another house. Another object of the architect, in building a house for a person of wealth or rank, is to make a secret door (“báb sirr”†), from which the tenant may make his escape in case of danger from an arrest, or an attempt at assassination—or by which to give access and egress to a paramour; and it is also common to make a hiding-place for treasure (called “makhba”) in some part of the house. In the Hareem of a large house there is generally a bath, which is heated in the same manner as the public baths.

Another style of building has lately been very generally adopted for houses of the more wealthy. These do not differ much from those already described, excepting in the windows, which are of glass, and placed almost close together. Each window of the hareem has, outside, a sliding frame of close wooden trellis-work, to cover the lower half. The numerous glass windows are ill adapted to a hot climate.

When shops occupy the lower part of the buildings in

* This is the measure of the sliding bolt.

† This term is also applied, sometimes, to the door of the Hareem.

a street (as is generally the case in the great thoroughfares of the metropolis, and in some of the by-streets), the superstructure is usually divided into distinct lodgings, and is termed "raba." These lodgings are separate from each other, as well as from the shops below, and let to families who cannot afford the rent of a whole house. Each lodging in a raba comprises one or two sitting or sleeping rooms, and generally a kitchen and latrina. It seldom has a separate entrance from the street; one entrance and one staircase usually admitting to a range of several lodgings. The apartments are similar to those of the private houses first described. They are never let ready-furnished; and it is very seldom that a person who has not a wife or female slave is allowed to reside in them, or in any private house: such a person (unless he have parents or other near relations to dwell with) is usually obliged to take up his abode in a "wekáleh," which is a building chiefly designed for the reception of merchants and their goods. Franks, however, are now exempted from this restriction.

Very few large or handsome houses are to be seen in Egypt, excepting in the metropolis and some other towns. The dwellings of the lower orders, particularly those of the peasants, are of a very mean description: they are mostly built of unbaked bricks, cemented together with mud. Some of them are mere hovels. The greater number, however, comprise two or more apartments; though few are two stories high. In one of these apartments, in the houses of the peasants in Lower Egypt, there is generally an oven ("furn"), at the end farthest from the entrance, and occupying the whole width of the chamber. It resembles a wide bench or seat, and is about breast-high: it is constructed of brick and mud; the roof arched within, and flat on the top. The inhabitants of the house, who seldom have any night-covering during the winter, sleep upon the top of the oven, having previously lighted a fire within it; or the husband and wife only enjoy this luxury, and the children sleep upon the floor. The chambers have small apertures high up in the walls, for

the admission of light and air—sometimes furnished with a grating of wood. The roofs are formed of palm-branches and palm-leaves, or of millet-stalks, &c., laid upon rafters of the trunk of the palm, and covered with a plaster of mud and chopped straw. The furniture consists of a mat or two to sleep upon, a few earthen vessels, and a hand-mill to grind the corn. In many villages, large pigeon-houses, of a square form, but with the walls slightly inclining inwards (like many of the ancient Egyptian buildings), or of the form of a sugar-loaf, are constructed upon the roofs of the huts, with crude brick, pottery, and mud.* Most of the villages of Egypt are situated upon eminences of rubbish, which rise a few feet above the reach of the inundation, and are surrounded by palm-trees, or have a few of these trees in their vicinity. The rubbish which they occupy chiefly consists of the materials of former huts, and seems to increase in about the same degree as the level of the alluvial plains and the bed of the river.

In a country where neither births nor deaths are registered, it is next to impossible to ascertain, with precision, the amount of the population. A few years ago a calculation was made, founded on the number of houses in Egypt, and the supposition that the inhabitants of each house in the metropolis amount to eight persons, and in the provinces to four. This computation approximates, I believe, very nearly to the truth; but personal observation and inquiry incline me to think that the houses of such towns as Alexandria, Boolák, and Maşr el-'Ateekah contain each, on the average, at least five persons: Rasheed (or Rosetta) is half deserted, but as to the crowded town of Dimyát† (or Danietta), we must reckon as many as six persons to each house, or our estimate will fall far short of what is generally believed to be the number of its inhabitants. The addition

* The earthen pots used in the construction of these pigeon-houses are of an oval form, with a wide mouth, which is placed outwards, and a small hole at the other end. Each pair of pigeons occupies a separate pot.

† Vulgarly called "Dumyát."

of one or two persons to each house in the above-mentioned towns will, however, make little difference in the computation of the whole population of Egypt, which was found by this mode of reckoning, to amount to rather more than 2,500,000; but it is now much reduced. Of 2,500,000 souls, say 1,200,000 are males; and one-third of this number (400,000) men fit for military service: from this latter number the present Básha of Egypt has taken at the least 200,000 (that is, one-half of the most serviceable portion of the male population) to form and recruit his armies of regular troops, and for the service of his navy. The further loss caused by withdrawing so many men from their wives, or preventing their marrying, during ten years, must surely far exceed 300,000: consequently, the present population may be calculated as less than two millions. The numbers of the several classes of which the population is mainly composed are nearly as follow:—

Muslim Egyptians (felláheen or peasants, and townspeople) . . .	1,750,000
Christian Egyptians (Copts) . . .	150,000
'Osmánlees, or Turks . . .	10,000
Syrians	5,000
Greeks	5,000
Armenians	2,000
Jews	5,000

Of the remainder (namely Arabians, Western Arabs, Nubians, Negro slaves, Memlooks [or white male slaves], female white slaves, Franks, &c.), amounting to about 70,000, the respective numbers are very uncertain and variable. The Arabs of the neighbouring deserts ought not to be included among the population of Egypt.*

Cairo, I have said, contains about 240,000 inhabitants.† We should be greatly deceived if we judged

* The Muslim Egyptians, Copts, Syrians, and Jews of Egypt, with few exceptions, speak no language but the Arabic, which is also the language generally used by the foreigners settled in this country. The Nubians, among themselves, speak their own dialects.

† The population of Cairo has increased to this amount, from about 200,000, within the last three or four years. Since the computation here

of the population of this city from the crowds that we meet in the principal thoroughfare-streets and markets: in most of the by-streets and quarters very few passengers are seen. Nor should we judge from the extent of the city and suburbs; for there are within the walls many vacant places, some of which, during the season of the inundation, are lakes (as the Birket el-Ezbekeeyeh, Birket el-Feel, &c.). The gardens, several burial-grounds, the courts of houses, and the mosques, also occupy a considerable space. Of the inhabitants of the metropolis, about 190,000 are Egyptian Muslims; about 10,000 Copts; 3000 or 4000 Jews; and the rest, strangers from various countries.*

The population of Egypt in the times of the Pharaohs was probably about six or seven millions.† The produce of the soil in the present age would suffice, if none were exported, for the maintenance of a population amounting to 4,000,000; and if all the soil which is capable of cultivation were sown, the produce would be sufficient for the maintenance of 8,000,000. But this would be the utmost number that Egypt could maintain in years of plentiful inundation: I therefore compute the ancient population, at the time when agriculture was in a very flourishing state, to have amounted to what I first stated; and must suppose it to have been scarcely more than half as numerous in the times of the Ptolemies, and at later periods, when a great quantity of corn was annually exported.‡ This calculation agrees with what Diodorus

stated was made, the plague of this year [1835] has destroyed not fewer than one-third of its inhabitants, as before mentioned; but this deficiency will be rapidly supplied from the villages.

* About one-third of the population of the metropolis consists of adult males. Of this number (or 80,000) about 30,000 are merchants, petty shopkeepers, and artisans; 20,000 domestic servants; 15,000 common labourers, porters, &c.: the remainder chiefly consists of military and civil servants of the government.

† I place but little reliance on the accounts of ancient authors on this subject.

‡ It has been suggested to me, that, if corn was exported, something of equal value was imported; and that the exportation of corn, or anything else, would give a stimulus to industry and to population: but I do not know what could be imported that would fill up the measure of the food necessary to sustain a population much greater than that which would consume the corn retained.

Siculus says (in lib. i. cap. 31); namely, that Egypt contained, in the times of the ancient kings, 7,000,000 inhabitants, and in his own time not less than 3,000,000.

How different now is the state of Egypt from what it might be; possessing a population of scarcely more than one quarter of the number that it might be rendered capable of supporting! How great a change might be effected in it by a truly enlightened government; by a prince who (instead of impoverishing the peasantry by depriving them of their lands, and by his monopolies of the most valuable productions of the soil; by employing the best portion of the population to prosecute his ambitious schemes of foreign conquest, and another large portion in the vain attempt to rival European manufactures) would give his people a greater interest in the cultivation of the fields, and make Egypt what nature designed it to be—almost exclusively an agricultural country! Its produce of cotton alone would more than suffice to procure all the articles of foreign manufacture, and all the natural productions of foreign countries, that the wants of its inhabitants demand.*

The desired change may now be easily effected; for since the above was written, the Básha has been placed in a new position, which will enable him to acquire a greater and more honourable fame by the cultivation of the arts of peace, than his conquests, brilliant as they have been, have hitherto procured for him. No one who is acquainted with the modern history of Egypt, and more particularly with the state of the country during the period that intervened between the French expedition and the accession of Mohámmad 'Alee to the office of Viceroy, can doubt that he possesses extraordinary talents for government; and let us hope that those talents will be rightly employed: but, as he himself affirms, some time will be required for effecting the necessary changes.

* During the present year [1835] more than 100,000 bales of cotton (each bale weighing a hundredweight and three quarters) have been shipped at Alexandria. The price paid for this quantity by the merchants exceeded 700,000*l*. The quantity exported last year was 34,000 bales, which is considerably less than usual.—The policy above recommended is strongly advocated by Ibráheem Básha.

CHAPTER I.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS, AND DRESS, OF THE MUSLIM
EGYPTIANS.

MUSLIMS of Arabian origin have, for many centuries, mainly composed the population of Egypt: they have changed its language, laws, and general manners; and its metropolis they have made the principal seat of Arabian learning and arts. To the description of this people, and especially of the middle and higher classes in the Egyptian capital, will be devoted the chief portion of the present work. In every point of view, Maṣr (or Cairo) must be regarded as the first Arab city of our age; and the manners and customs of its inhabitants are particularly interesting, as they are a combination of those which prevail most generally in the towns of Arabia, Syria, and the whole of Northern Africa, and in a great degree in Turkey. There is no other place in which we can obtain so complete a knowledge of the most civilised classes of the Arabs.

From statements made in the introduction to this work, it appears that Muslim Egyptians (or Arab-Egyptians) compose nearly four-fifths of the population of the metropolis (which is computed to amount to about 240,000), and just seven-eighths of that of all Egypt.

The Muslim Egyptians are descended from various Arab tribes and families which have settled in Egypt at different periods; mostly soon after the conquest of this country by 'Amr, its first Arab governor; but by intermarriages with the Copts and others who have become proselytes to the faith of El-Islám, as well as by the change from a life of wandering to that of citizens or of agriculturists, their personal characteristics have, by de-

grees, become so much altered, that there is a strongly marked difference between them and the natives of Arabia. Yet they are to be regarded as not less genuine Arabs than the townspeople of Arabia itself; among whom has long and very generally prevailed a custom of keeping Abyssinian female slaves, either instead of marrying their own countrywomen or (as is commonly the case with the opulent) in addition to their Arab wives: so that they bear almost as strong a resemblance to the Abyssinians as to the Bedaweers, or Arabs of the Desert. The term "'Arab,"* it should here be remarked, is now used, wherever the Arabic language is spoken, only to designate the Bedaweers collectively: in speaking of a tribe, or of a small number of those people, the word "'Orbán" is also used; and a single individual is called "Bedawee."† In the metropolis and other towns of Egypt, the distinction of tribes is almost wholly lost; but it is preserved among the peasants, who have retained many Bedawee customs, of which I shall have to speak. The native Muslim inhabitants of Cairo commonly call themselves "El-Maşreeyen," "Owlád-Maşr" (or "Ahl-Maşr"), and "Owlád-el-Beled," which signify people of Maşr, children of Maşr, and children of the town: the singular forms of these appellations are "Maşree," "Ibn-Maşr," and "Ibn-el-Beled."‡ Of these three terms, the last is most common in the town itself. The country people are called "El-Felláheen" (or the agriculturists), in the singular "Felláh."§ The Turks often apply this term to the Egyptians in general in an abusive sense, as meaning the "boors," or "the clowns;" and improperly stigmatize them with the appellation of "Ahl-Far'oon,"|| or "the people of Pharaoh."

In general, the Muslim Egyptians attain the height

* This term was formerly used to designate the Arabian townspeople and villagers, while the Arabs who dwelt in the Desert were called "Aaráb," or "Aarábees." The Arabs dwelling in houses now term themselves "Owlád-el-'Arab," or sons of the Arabs.

† Feminine, "Bedaweeyeh."

‡ In the feminine, "Maşreeyeh," "Bint-Maşr," and "Bint-el-Beled."

§ Feminine, "Fellálah."

|| Thus commonly pronounced for "Fir'own."

of about five feet eight, or five feet nine inches. Most of the children under nine or ten years of age have spare limbs and a distended abdomen; but, as they grow up, their forms rapidly improve: in mature age, most of them are remarkably well-proportioned; the men muscular and robust; the women, very beautifully formed, and plump; and neither sex is too fat. I have never seen corpulent persons among them, excepting a few in the metropolis and other towns, rendered so by a life of inactivity. In Cairo, and throughout the northern provinces, those who have not been much exposed to the sun have a yellowish but very clear complexion, and soft skin; the rest are of a considerably darker and coarser complexion. The people of Middle Egypt are of a more tawny colour, and those of the more southern provinces are of a deep bronze or brown complexion—darkest towards Nubia, where the climate is hottest. In general, the countenance of the Muslim Egyptian (I here speak of the *men*) is of a fine oval form: the forehead of moderate size, seldom high, but generally prominent: the eyes are deep-sunk, black, and brilliant: the nose is straight, but rather thick: the mouth well formed: the lips are rather full than otherwise: the teeth particularly beautiful: * the beard is commonly black and curly, but scanty. I have seen very few individuals of this race with grey eyes; or rather, few persons supposed to be of this race; for I am inclined to think them the offspring of Arab women by Turks or other foreigners. The Felláheen, from constant exposure to the sun, have a habit of half shutting their eyes: this is also characteristic of the Bedawees. Great numbers of the Egyptians are blind in one or both eyes. They generally shave that part of the cheek which is above the lower jaw, and likewise a small space under the lower lip, leaving, however, the hairs which grow in the middle under the mouth; or, instead of shaving these

* Tooth-ache is, however, a very common disorder in Egypt, as it was in ancient times: this, at least, was probably the case, as Herodotus (lib. ii. cap. 84) mentions dentists among the classes of Egyptian physicians. It is, of course, most prevalent among the higher orders.

parts, they pluck out the hair. They also shave a part of the beard under the chin. Very few shave the rest of their beards,* and none their mustaches. The former they suffer to grow to the length of about a hand's breadth below the chin (such, at least, is the general rule, and such was the custom of the Prophet); and their mustaches they do not allow to become so long as to incommode them in eating and drinking. The practice of dyeing the beard is not common; for a grey beard is much respected. The Egyptians shave all the rest of the hair, or leave only a small tuft (called "shoosheh") upon the crown of the head.† This last custom (which is almost universal among them), I have been told, originated in the fear that if the Muslim should fall into the hands of an infidel, and be slain, the latter might cut off the head of his victim, and finding no hair by which to hold it, put his impure hand into the mouth, in order to carry it; for the beard might not be sufficiently long.‡ With the like view of avoiding impurity, the Egyptians observe other customs, which need not here be described.§ Many men of the lower orders, and some others, make blue marks upon their arms, and sometimes upon the hands and chest, as the women; in speaking of whom this operation will be described.

The dress of the men of the middle and higher classes consists of the following articles.|| First, a pair of full drawers¶ of linen or cotton, tied round the body by a

* A few of the servants, and some others, shave their beards. The respect which Orientals in general pay to the beard has often been remarked. They swear by it, and say that a man disgraces it by an evil action. The punishment recorded in 2 Samuel, ch. x. ver. 4, has frequently been practised in modern times, but not so often as the shaving of the whole of the beard.

† The Muslims hold it to be inconsistent with the honour that is due to everything that has appertained to the human body to leave upon the ground the shavings or clippings of hair, the parings of nails, &c.; which, therefore, they generally bury in the earth.

‡ Persons of literary and religious professions generally disapprove of the shoosheh.

§ They are mentioned in the 'Mishcát-ul-Masábih,' vol. ii. p. 359, and are observed by both sexes.

|| The fashion of their dress remains almost the same during the lapse of centuries.

¶ In Arabic, "libás."

running string or band,* the ends of which are embroidered with coloured silks, though concealed by the outer dress. The drawers descend a little below the knees, or to the ankles; but many of the Arabs will not wear long drawers, because prohibited by the Prophet. Next is worn a shirt,† with very full sleeves, reaching to the wrist: it is made of linen, of a loose, open texture, or of cotton stuff, or of muslin, or silk, or of a mixture of silk and cotton, in stripes, but all white.‡ Over this, in winter, or in cool weather, most persons wear a “sudeyree,” which is a short vest of cloth, or of striped coloured silk and cotton, without sleeves. Over the shirt and the sudeyree, or the former alone, is worn a long vest of striped silk and cotton§ (called “kaftán,” or more commonly “kuftán”), descending to the ankles, with long sleeves extending a few inches beyond the fingers’ ends, but divided from a point a little above the wrist, or about the middle of the fore-arm; so that the hand is generally exposed, though it may be concealed by the sleeve when necessary; for it is customary to cover the hands in the presence of a person of high rank. Round this vest is wound the girdle,|| which is a coloured shawl, or a long piece of white figured muslin. The ordinary outer robe is a long cloth coat, of any colour (called by the Turks “jubbeh,” but by the Egyptians “gibbeh”), the sleeves of which reach not quite to the wrist.¶ Some persons also wear a “beneesh,” or “benish;” which is a robe of cloth, with long sleeves, like those of the kuftán, but more ample:** it is, properly, a robe of ceremony, and should be worn over the other cloth coat; but many persons wear it *instead* of the gibbeh. Another robe, called “farageeyeh,” nearly resembles the beneesh: it has very long sleeves; but these are not slit; and it is chiefly

* Called “dikkeh,” or “tikkeh.”

† “Kamees.”

‡ The prophet forbade men to wear silk clothing, but allowed women to do so. The prohibition is, however, attended to by very few modern Muslims, excepting the Wahhábées.

§ The stripes are seldom plain: they are generally figured or flowered.

|| “Hezám.”

¶ See the foremost figure in the following engraving.

** See the figure to the left in the same engraving.



Men of the Middle and Higher Classes.

worn by men of the learned professions. In cold or cool weather, a kind of black woollen cloak, called "'abáyeh," is commonly worn.* Sometimes this is drawn over the head. In winter also many persons wrap a muslin or other shawl (such as they use for a turban) about the head and shoulders. The head-dress consists, first, of a small, close-fitting cotton cap,† which is often changed; next, a "tarboosh," which is a red cloth cap, also fitting closely to the head, with a tassel of dark blue silk at the crown; lastly, a long piece of white muslin, generally figured, or a Kashmeer shawl, which is wound round the tarboosh. Thus is formed the turban.‡ The Kashmeer shawl is seldom worn excepting in cool weather. Some persons wear two or three tarbooshes, one over another. A "shereef" (or descendant of the Prophet) wears a green turban, or is privileged to do so; but no other person; and it is not common for any but a shereef to wear a bright green dress. Stockings are not in use; but some few persons, in cold weather, wear woollen or cotton socks. The shoes§ are of thick red morocco, pointed, and turning up at the toes. Some persons also wear inner shoes|| of soft yellow morocco, and with soles of the same: the outer shoes are taken off on stepping upon a carpet or mat; but not the inner: for this reason, the former are often worn turned down at the heel.

On the little finger of the right hand is worn a seal-ring,¶ which is generally of silver, with a carnelion, or other stone, upon which is engraved the wearer's name: the name is usually accompanied by the words "his servant" (signifying "the servant, or worshipper, of God"), and often by other words expressive of the person's trust in God, &c.** The Prophet disapproved of gold; therefore few Muslims wear gold rings: but the women have various ornaments (rings, bracelets, &c.) of that precious

* See the next engraving, in which is represented a striped 'abáyeh.

† Called "tákeeyeh," or "'araķeeyeh."

‡ "'Emámeh."

§ "Markoob."

|| "Mezz," or, more properly, "mezd;" from the Turkish "mest."

¶ "Khátim."—It is allowable to wear it on a finger of the left hand.

** See St. John's Gospel, iii. 33: and Exodus, xxxix. 30.

metal. The seal-ring is used for signing letters and other writings; and its impression is considered more valid than the sign-manual.* A little ink is dabbed upon it with one of the fingers, and it is pressed upon the paper—the person who uses it having first touched his tongue with another finger, and moistened the place in the paper which is to be stamped. Almost every person who can afford it has a seal-ring, even though he be a servant. The regular scribes, literary men, and many others, wear a silver, brass, or copper “dawāyeh,” which is a case with receptacles for ink and pens, stuck in the girdle.† Some have, in the place of this, or in addition to it, a case-knife or a dagger.

The Egyptian generally takes his pipe with him wherever he goes (unless it be to the mosque), or has a servant to carry it, though it is not a common custom to smoke while riding or walking. The tobacco-purse he crams into his bosom, the kuṣṭān being large, and lapping over in front. A handkerchief, embroidered with coloured silks and gold, and neatly folded, is also placed in the bosom. Many persons of the middle orders, who wish to avoid being thought rich, conceal such a dress as I have described by a long black gown of cotton, similar to the gown worn by most persons of the lower classes.

The costume of the men of the lower orders is very simple. These, if not of the very poorest class, wear a pair of drawers, and a long and full shirt or gown of blue linen or cotton, or of brown woollen stuff (the former called “’eree,” and the latter “zaḥboṭ”), open from the neck nearly to the waist, and having wide sleeves.‡ Over this, some wear a white or red woollen girdle. Their turban is generally composed of a white, red, or yellow woollen shawl, or of a piece of coarse cotton or muslin, wound round a ṭarboosh, under which is a white

* Therefore, giving the ring to another person is the utmost mark of confidence.—See Genesis, xli. 42.

† This is a very ancient custom. — See Ezekiel, ix. 2, 3, 11. — The dawāyeh is represented in a cut in Chapter IX.

‡ The zaḥboṭ is mostly worn in the winter.



Men of the Lower Classes.

or brown felt cap; * but many are so poor as to have no other cap than the latter—no turban, nor even drawers, nor shoes, but only the blue or brown shirt, or merely a few rags; while many, on the other hand, wear a şudeyree under the blue shirt; and some, particularly servants in the houses of great men, wear a white shirt, a şudeyree, and a kuftán or gibbeh, or both, and the blue shirt over all. The full sleeves of this shirt are sometimes drawn up, by means of cords, which pass round each shoulder and cross behind, where they are tied in a knot. This custom is adopted by servants (particularly grooms), who have cords of crimson or dark blue silk for this purpose. In cold weather, many persons of the lower classes wear an 'abáyeh, like that before described, but coarser, and sometimes (instead of being black) having broad stripes, brown and white, or blue and white, but the latter rarely. Another kind of cloak, more full than the 'abáyeh, of black or deep-blue woollen stuff, is also very commonly worn: it is called "diffeeyeh." † The shoes are of red or yellow morocco, or of sheep-skin.

Several different forms of turbans are represented in some of the engravings which illustrate this work. The Muslims are distinguished by the colours of their turbans from the Copts and the Jews, who (as well as other subjects of the Turkish Sultán who are not Muslims) wear black, blue, grey, or light-brown turbans, and generally dull-coloured dresses. The distinction of sects, families, dynasties, &c., among the Muslim Arabs, by the colour of the turban and other articles of dress, is of very early origin. When the Imám Ibráheem Ibn-Moḥammad, asserting his pretensions to the dignity of Khaleefeh, ‡ was put to death by the Umawee Khaleefeh Marwán, many persons of the family of El-'Abbás assumed black clothing, in testimony of their sorrow for his fate; and

* Called "libdeh."

† A kind of blue and white plaid (called "miláyeh") is also worn by some men, but more commonly by women, in the account of whose dress it will be further described: the men throw it over the shoulders, or wrap it about the body.

‡ Commonly written by English authors "Caliph," or "Khalíf."

hence the black dress and turban (which latter is now characteristic, almost solely, of Christian and Jewish tributaries to the 'Osmánlee, or 'Turkish, Sultán) became the distinguishing costume of the 'Abbásee Khaleefehs, and of their officers. When an officer under this dynasty was disgraced, he was made to wear a white dress. White was adopted by the false prophet El-Muḩanna', to distinguish his party from the 'Abbásees; and the Fawáṭim of Egypt (or Khaleefehs of the race of Fáṭimeh), as rivals of the 'Abbásees, wore a white costume. El-Melik El-Ashraf Shaabán, a Sultán of Egypt (who reigned from the year of the Flight 764 to 778, or A.D. 1362 to 1376), was the first who ordered the "shereefs" to distinguish themselves by the green turban and dress. Some darwecshes of the sect of the Rifá'ees, and a few, but very few, other Muslims, wear a turban of black woollen stuff, or of a very deep olive-coloured (almost black) muslin; but that of the Copts, Jews, &c. is generally of black or blue muslin or linen. There are not many different *forms* of turbans now worn in Egypt: that worn by most of the servants is very formal. The kind common among the middle and higher classes of the tradesmen and other citizens of the metropolis and large towns is also very formal, but less so than that just before alluded to. The Turkish turban worn in Egypt is of a more elegant mode. The Syrian is distinguished by its width. The 'Ulama, and men of religion and letters in general, used to wear, as some



The Muḩleh.

do still, one particularly wide and formal, called a "mukleh." The turban is much respected. In the houses of the more wealthy classes, there is usually a chair* on which it is placed at night. This is often sent with the furniture of a bride; as it is common for a lady to have one upon which to place her head-dress. This kind of chair is never used for any other purpose. As an instance of the respect paid to the turban, one of my friends mentioned to me that an 'álim† being thrown off his donkey in a street of this city, his mukleh fell off, and rolled along for several yards: whereupon the passengers ran after it, crying, "Lift up the crown of El-Islám!" while the poor 'álim, whom no one came to assist, called out in anger, "Lift up the *sheykh* ‡ of El-Islám!"

The general form and features of the *women* must now be described. From the age of about fourteen to that of eighteen or twenty, they are generally models of beauty in body and limbs; and in countenance most of them are pleasing, and many exceedingly lovely: but soon after they have attained their perfect growth, they rapidly decline; the bosom early loses all its beauty, acquiring, from the relaxing nature of the climate, an excessive length and flatness in its forms, even while the face retains its full charms; and though, in most other respects, time does not commonly so soon nor so much deform them, at the age of forty it renders many, who in earlier years possessed considerable attractions, absolutely ugly. In the Egyptian females, the forms of womanhood begin to develop themselves about the ninth or tenth year: at the age of fifteen or sixteen they generally attain their highest degree of perfection. With regard to their complexions, the same remarks apply to them as to the men, with only this difference, that their faces, being generally veiled when they go abroad, are not quite so much tanned as those of the men. They

* Called "kursee el-'emámeh."

† This appellation (cf. which "'ulama" is the plural) signifies a man of science or learning.

‡ "Sheykh" here signifies *master*, or *doctor*.

are characterized, like the men, by a fine oval countenance; though in some instances it is rather broad. The eyes, with very few exceptions, are black, large, and of a long almond-form, with long and beautiful lashes, and an exquisitely soft, bewitching expression: eyes more beautiful can hardly be conceived; their charming effect is much heightened by the concealment of the other features (however pleasing the latter may be), and is rendered still more striking by a practice universal among the females of the higher and middle classes, and very common among those of the lower orders, which is that of blackening the edge of the eyelids, both above and below the eye, with a black powder called "kohl." This



An eye ornamented with Kohl.

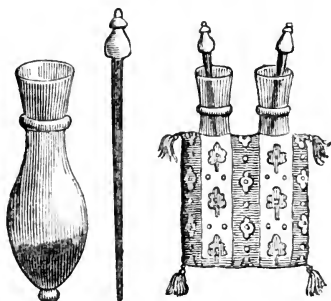
is a collyrium commonly composed of the smoke-black which is produced by burning a kind of "liban"—an aromatic resin—a species of frankincense, used, I am told, in preference to the better kind of frankincense, as being cheaper and equally good for this purpose. Kohl is also prepared of the smoke-black produced by burning the shells of almonds. These two kinds, though believed to be beneficial to the eyes, are used merely for ornament; but there are several kinds used for their real or supposed medical properties; particularly the powder of several kinds of lead-ore; * to which are often added sarcocolla,† long pepper,‡ sugar-candy, fine dust of a Venetian sequin, and sometimes powdered pearls. Antimony, it is said, was formerly used for painting the edges of the eyelids. The kohl is applied with a small probe of wood, ivory, or silver, tapering towards the end, but blunt: this is moistened, sometimes with rose-water, then dipped in the powder, and drawn along the

* "Kohl el-hagar."

† "Anzaroot."

‡ "'Erk ed-dahab."

edges of the eyelids, it is called "mirwed;" and the glass vessel in which the kohl is kept "muk-hul'ah." The custom of thus ornamenting the eyes prevailed



Muk-hul'ahs and Mirweds.

These are represented on scales of one-third, and a quarter, of the real size.

among both sexes in Egypt in very ancient times: this is shown by the sculptures and paintings in the temples and tombs of this country; and kohl-vessels, with the



Ancient Vessel and Probe for Kohl.

probes, and even with the remains of the black powder, have often been found in the ancient tombs. I have two in my possession. But in many cases, the ancient mode of ornamenting with the kohl was a little different

from the modern, as shown by the subjoined sketch : I have, however, seen this ancient mode practised in the present day in the neighbourhood of Cairo ; though I



An Eye and Eyebrow ornamented with Kohl, as represented in ancient Paintings.

only remember to have noticed it in two instances. The same custom existed among the ancient Greek ladies, and among the Jewish women in early times.* The eyes of the Egyptian women are generally the most beautiful of their features. Countenances altogether handsome are far less common among this race than handsome figures ; but I have seen among them faces distinguished by a style of beauty possessing such sweetness of expression, that they have struck me as exhibiting the perfection of female loveliness, and impressed me with the idea (perhaps not false) that their equals could not be found in any other country : with such eyes as many of them have, the face must be handsome, if its other features be but moderately well formed.† The nose is generally straight : the lips are mostly rather fuller than those of the men, but not in the least degree partaking of the negro character. The hair is of that deep, glossy black, which best suits all but fair complexions : in some instances it is rather coarse and crisp, but never woolly.

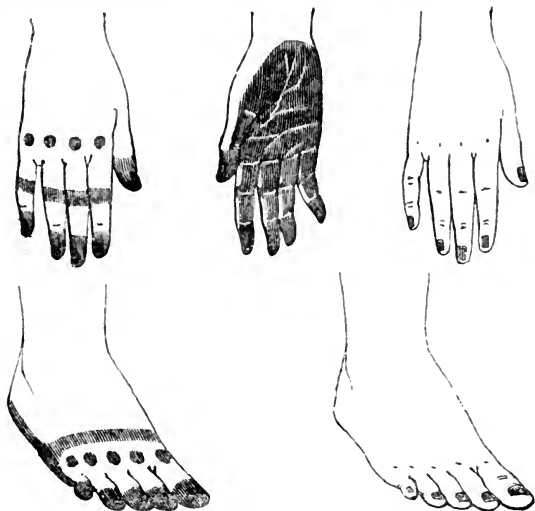
The females of the higher and middle classes, and many of the poorer women, stain certain parts of their hands and feet (which are, with very few exceptions, beautifully formed) with the leaves of the henna-tree,‡

* See 2 Kings, ix. 30, (where, in our common version, we find the words, " painted her face," for " painted her eyes,") and Ezekiel, xxiii. 40.

† Scissors are often used to reduce the width of the eye-brows, and to give them a more arched form.

‡ *Lawsonia inermis* : also called " Egyptian privet."

which impart a yellowish red, or deep orange colour. Many thus dye only the nails of the fingers and toes ;



Hands and Feet stained with Henna.

others extend the dye as high as the first joint of each finger and toe ; some also make a stripe along the next row of joints ; and there are several other fanciful modes of applying the henna ; but the most common practice is to dye the tips of the fingers and toes as high as the first joint, and the whole of the inside of the hand and the sole of the foot ;* adding, though not always, the stripe above mentioned along the middle joints of the fingers, and a similar stripe a little above the toes. The henna

* The application of this dye to the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet is said to have an agreeable effect upon the skin ; particularly to prevent its being too tender and sensitive.

is prepared for this use merely by being powdered and mixed with a little water, so as to form a paste. Some of this paste being spread in the palm of the hand, and on other parts of it which are to be dyed, and the fingers being doubled, and their extremities inserted into the paste in the palm, the whole hand is tightly bound with linen, and remains thus during a whole night. In a similar manner it is applied to the feet. The colour does not disappear until after many days : it is generally renewed after about a fortnight or three weeks. This custom prevails not only in Egypt, but in several other countries of the East, which are supplied with henna from the banks of the Nile. To the nails, the henna imparts a more bright, clear, and permanent colour than to the skin. When this dye alone is applied to the nails, or to a larger portion of the fingers and toes, it may, with some reason, be regarded as an embellishment ; for it makes the general complexion of the hand and foot appear more delicate ; but many ladies stain their hands in a manner much less agreeable to our taste : by applying, immediately after the removal of the paste of henna, another paste composed of quick-lime, common smoke-black, and linseed-oil, they convert the tint of the henna to a black, or to a blackish olive hue. Ladies in Egypt are often seen with their nails stained with this colour, or with their fingers of the same dark hue from the extremity to the first joint, red from the first to the second joint, and of the former colour from the second to the third joint ; with the palm also stained in a similar manner, having a broad, dark stripe across the middle, and the rest left red ; the thumb dark from the extremity to the first joint, and red from the first to the second joint. Some, after a more simple fashion, blacken the ends of the fingers and the whole of the inside of the hand.

Among the females of the lower orders, in the country-towns and villages of Egypt, and among the same classes in the metropolis, but in a less degree, prevails a custom somewhat similar to that above described : it consists in making indelible marks of a blue or greenish



A tattooed Girl.



Tattooed Hands and Foot.

hue upon the face and other parts, or, at least, upon the front of the chin, and upon the back of the right hand, and



Specimens of tattooing on the Chin.

often also upon the left hand, the right arm, or both arms, the feet, the middle of the bosom, and the forehead: the most common of these marks made upon the chin and hands are here represented. The operation is performed with several needles (generally seven) tied together: with these the skin is pricked in the desired pattern: some smoke-black (of wood or oil), mixed with milk from the breast of a woman, is then rubbed in; and about a week after, before the skin has healed, a paste of the pounded fresh leaves of white beet or clover is applied, and gives a blue or greenish colour to the marks: or, to produce the same effect, in a more simple manner, some indigo is rubbed into the punctures, instead of the smoke-black, &c. It is generally performed at the age of about five or six years, and by gipsy-women. The term applied to it is "dakḳ." Most of the females of the higher parts of Upper Egypt, who are of a very dark complexion, tattoo their lips instead of the parts above-mentioned; thus converting their natural colour to a dull, bluish hue, which, to the eye of a stranger, is extremely displeasing.*

Another characteristic of the Egyptian women that should be here mentioned, is their upright carriage and gait. This is most remarkable in the female peasantry, owing, doubtless, in a great measure, to their habit of bearing a heavy earthen water-vessel, and other burthens, upon the head.

The dress of the women of the middle and higher

* The depilatory most commonly used by the Egyptian women is a kind of resin, called libán shámeé, applied in a melted state: but this, they pretend, is not always necessary: by applying the blood of a bat to the skin of a newly-born female infant, on the parts where they wish no hair to grow, they assert that they accomplish this desire. A female upon whom this application has been made is termed "muwaṭṭaḥ:" from "waṭwát," a bat. Some women pluck out the hair after merely rubbing the part with the ashes of charcoal.



A Lady in the Dress worn in private.

orders is handsome and elegant. Their shirt is very full, like that of the men—but rather shorter—reaching not quite to the knees: it is also, generally, of the same kind of material as the men's shirt, or of coloured crape—sometimes black. A pair of very wide trowsers (called “shintiyán”), of a coloured striped stuff of silk and cotton, or of printed, or worked, or plain white muslin, is tied round the hips, under the shirt, with a dikkeh: its lower extremities are drawn up and tied just below the knee with running strings; but it is sufficiently long to hang down to the feet, or almost to the ground, when attached in this manner. Over the shirt and shintiyán is worn a long vest (called “yelek”), of the same material as the latter: it nearly resembles the kuftán of the men; but is more tight to the body and arms: the sleeves also are longer; and it is made to button down the front, from the bosom to a little below the girdle, instead of lapping over: it is open, likewise, on each side, from the height of the hip, downwards. In general, the yelek is cut in such a manner as to leave half of the bosom uncovered, except by the shirt; but many ladies have it made more ample at that part: and, according to the most approved fashion, it should be of a sufficient length to reach to the ground, or should exceed that length by two or three inches, or more. A short vest (called “’anter’ee”), reaching only a little below the waist, and exactly resembling a yelek of which the lower part has been cut off, is sometimes worn instead of the latter. A square shawl, or an embroidered kerchief, doubled diagonally, is put loosely round the waist as a girdle; the two corners that are folded together hanging down behind. Over the yelek is worn a gibbeh of cloth, or velvet, or silk, usually embroidered with gold or with coloured silk: it differs in form from the gibbeh of the men chiefly in being not so wide; particularly in the fore part; and is of the same length as the yelek. Instead of this, a jacket (called “saltah”), generally of cloth or velvet, and embroidered in the same manner as the gibbeh, is often worn. The head-dress consists of a tákeeyeh and tarboosh, with a square kerchief (called “farooddeeyeh”) of printed or painted muslin, or one of

crape, wound tightly round, composing what is called a "rabtah." Two or more such kerchiefs were commonly used, a short time since, and are still sometimes, to form the ladies' turban, but always wound in a high, flat



A Lady adorned with the Kursa and Safa, &c.—(The Hand is partially stained with Henna.)

shape, very different from that of the turban of the men. A kind of crown, called “*kurs*,” and other ornaments, are attached to the ladies’ head-dress : descriptions and engravings of these and other ornaments of the women of Egypt will be found in the Appendix to this work. A long piece of white muslin embroidered at each end with coloured silks and gold, or of coloured crape ornamented with gold thread, &c., and spangles, rests upon the head, and hangs down behind, nearly or quite to the ground : this is called “*tarḥah*”—it is the head-veil : the face-veil I shall presently describe. The hair, excepting over the forehead and temples, is divided into numerous braids or plaits, generally from eleven to twenty-five in number, but always of an uneven number : these hang down the back. To each braid of hair are usually added three black silk cords, with little ornaments of gold, &c. attached to them. For a description of these, which are called “*ṣafa*,” I refer to the Appendix. Over the forehead, the hair is cut rather short ; but two full locks* hang down on each side of the face : these are often curled in ringlets, and sometimes plaited.† Few of the ladies of Egypt wear stockings or socks, but many of them wear “*mezz*” (or inner shoes), of yellow or red morocco, sometimes embroidered with gold : over these, whenever they step off the matted or carpeted part of the floor, they put on “*báboog*” (or slippers) of yellow morocco, with high, pointed toes ; or use high wooden clogs or pattens,‡ generally from four to nine inches in height, and usually ornamented with mother-of-pearl, or silver, &c. These are always used in the bath by men and women ; but not by many ladies at home : some ladies wear them merely to keep their skirts from trailing on the ground : others, to make themselves appear tall.—Such is the dress which is worn by the Egyptian ladies in the house.

The riding or walking attire is called “*tezyeereh*.”

* Called “*maḳáṣeeṣ*.”

† Egyptian women swear by the side-lock (as men do by the beard), generally holding it when they utter the oath, “*Wa-ḥayát maḳṣooṣee!*”

‡ Called “*ḳabḳáb*,” or, more commonly, “*ḳubḳáb*.”

Whenever a lady leaves the house, she wears, in addition to what has been above described, first, a large loose gown (called "tób," or "sebleh"), the sleeves of which are nearly equal in width to the whole length of the gown :* it is of silk ; generally of a pink, or rose, or violet colour. Next is put on the "burko'," or face-veil, which is a long strip of white muslin, concealing the whole of the face except the eyes, and reaching nearly to the feet. It is suspended at the top by a narrow band, which passes up the forehead, and which is sewed, as are also the two upper corners of the veil, to a band that is tied round the head. The lady then covers herself with a "habarah," which, for a married lady, is composed of two breadths of glossy black silk, each ell-wide, and three yards long : these are sewed together, at or near the selvages (according to the height of the person) ; the seam running horizontally, with respect to the manner in which it is worn : a piece of narrow black riband is sewed inside the upper part, about six inches from the edge, to tie round the head. This covering is always worn in the manner shown by the accompanying sketch. The unmarried ladies wear a habarah of white silk, or a shawl. Some females of the middle classes, who cannot afford to purchase a habarah, wear instead of it an "eezár;" which is a piece of white calico, of the same form and size as the former, and is worn in the same manner. On the feet are worn short boots or socks (called "khuff"), of yellow morocco, and over these the "báboog."

This dress, though chiefly designed for females of the higher classes, who are seldom seen in public on foot, is worn by many women who cannot often afford so far to imitate their superiors as to hire an ass to carry them. It is extremely inconvenient as a walking attire. Viewing it as a disguise for whatever is attractive or graceful in the person and adornments of the wearer, we should not find fault with it for being itself deficient in grace : we must remark, however, that, in one respect, it fails

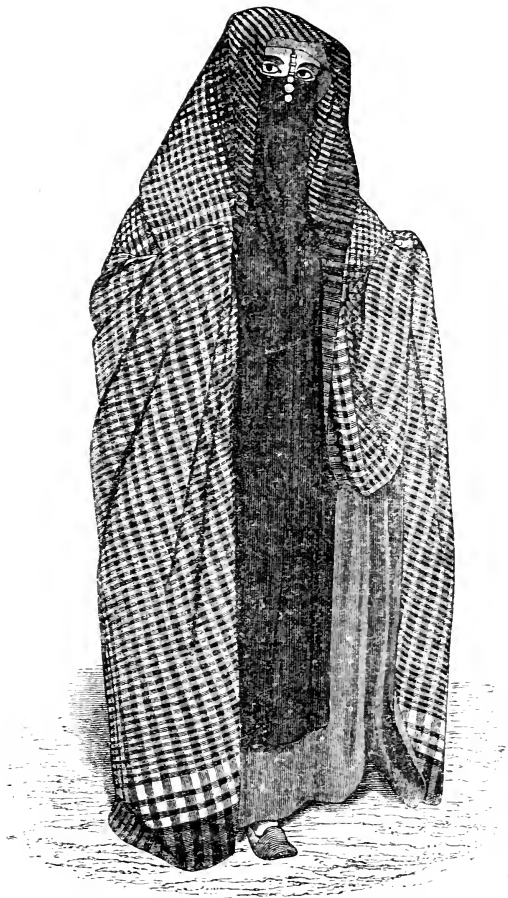
* This is similar in form to the tób of women of the lower orders, represented in the engraving in page 74.



Ladies attired for Riding or Walking.



Women and Children of the Lower Classes.



A Woman clad in the Miláye, &c.

in accomplishing its main purpose; displaying the eyes, which are almost always beautiful; making them to appear still more so by concealing the other features, which are seldom of equal beauty; and often causing the stranger to imagine a defective face perfectly charming. The veil is of very remote antiquity;* but, from the sculptures and paintings of the ancient Egyptians, it seems not to have been worn by the females of that nation.

The dress of a large proportion of those women of the lower orders who are not of the poorest class consists of a pair of trowsers or drawers (similar in form to the *shintiyán* of the ladies, but generally of plain white cotton or linen), a blue linen or cotton shirt (not quite so full as that of the men), a *burko'* of a kind of coarse black crape,† and a dark blue *ṭarḥah* of muslin or linen. Some wear, over the shirt, or instead of the latter, a linen *tób*, of the same form as that of the ladies.‡ The sleeves of this are often turned up over the head; either to prevent their being inconvenient, or to supply the place of a *ṭarḥah*.§ In addition to these articles of dress, many women who are not of the very poor classes wear, as a covering, a kind of plaid, similar in form to the *ḥabarah*, composed of two pieces of cotton, woven in small chequers of blue and white, or cross stripes, with a mixture of red at each end. It is called "*miláyeḥ*;"|| in general it is worn in the same manner as the *ḥabarah*; but sometimes like the *ṭarḥah*.¶ The upper part of the black *burko'* is often ornamented with false pearls, small gold coins, and other little flat ornaments of the same metal (called "*bark*"); sometimes with a coral bead, and a gold coin beneath; also with small coins of base silver; and more commonly

* See Genesis, xxiv. 65; and Isaiah, iii. 23. See also 1 Corinthians, xi. 10, and a marginal note on that verse.

† Some of those who are descended from the Prophet wear a green *burko'*.

‡ See the figure to the left, in page 74.

§ See the figure to the right, in p. 74.

|| For "*mulááh*."

¶ There is a superior kind of *miláyeḥ*, of silk, and of various colours; but this is now seldom worn. The two pieces which compose the *miláyeḥ* are sewed together like those which compose the *ḥabarah*."

with a pair of chain tassels, of brass or silver (called “’oyoon”), attached to the corners. A square black silk kerchief (called “aşbeh”), with a border of red and yellow, is bound round the head, doubled diagonally,



Ornamented black Veils.—Only one of these (that to the right) is represented in its whole length.

and tied with a single knot behind ; or, instead of this, the *tarboosh* and *farooddeeyeh* are worn, though by very few women of the lower classes. The best kind of shoes worn by the females of the lower orders are of red morocco, turned up, but round, at the toes. The *burko'* and shoes are most common in Cairo, and are also worn by many of the women throughout Lower Egypt ; but

in Upper Egypt, the burko' is very seldom seen, and shoes are scarcely less uncommon. To supply the place of the former, when necessary, a portion of the *tarhah* is drawn before the face, so as to conceal nearly all the countenance excepting one eye. Many of the women of the lower orders, even in the metropolis, never conceal their faces. Throughout the greater part of Egypt



The 'Aṣbeli.

the most common dress of the women merely consists of the blue shirt, or *tób*, and *tarhah*. In the southern parts of Upper Egypt, chiefly above Akhmeem,* most of the women envelop themselves in a large piece of dark brown woollen stuff (called a "*ḥulaleeyeh*"), wrapping it round the body, and attaching the upper parts together over each shoulder;† and a piece of the same they use as a *tarhah*. This dull dress, though picturesque, is almost as disguising as the blue tinge which, as I have before mentioned, the women in these parts of Egypt impart to their lips. Most of the women of the lower orders wear a variety of trumpery ornaments, such as ear-rings, necklaces, bracelets, &c., and sometimes a nose-ring. De-

* More properly called Ikhmeem.

† The classical reader will recognise, in this picturesque garment, an article of ancient Greek and Roman female attire.



A Woman of the Southern Province of Upper Egypt.—(Sketched at Thebes.)

scriptions and engravings of some of these ornaments will be given in the Appendix.

The women of Egypt deem it more incumbent upon them to cover the upper and back part of the head than the face ; and more requisite to conceal the face than most other parts of the person. I have often seen, in this country, women but half covered with miserable rags ; and several times, females in the prime of womanhood, and others in more advanced age, with nothing on the body but a narrow strip of rag bound round the hips.

CHAPTER II.

INFANCY AND EARLY EDUCATION.

IN the rearing and general treatment of their children, the Muslims are chiefly guided by the directions of their Prophet, and other religious institutors. One of the first duties required to be performed on the birth of a child is to pronounce the adán (or call to prayer) in the infant's right ear; and this should be done by a male. Some persons also pronounce the ikámeh (which is nearly the same as the adán) in the left ear.* The object of each of these ceremonies is to preserve the infant from the influence of the ginn, or genii. Another custom, observed with the same view, is to say, "In the name of the Prophet and of his cousin† 'Álee!"

It was a custom very common in Egypt, as in other Muslim countries, to consult an astrologer previously to giving a name to a child, and to be guided by his choice; but very few persons now conform with this old usage: the father makes choice of a name for his son, and confers it without any ceremony: a daughter is generally named by her mother. Boys are often named after the Prophet (Moḥammad, Alímad, or Muṣṭaf'a), or some of the members of his family ('Álee, Ḥasan, Ḥoseyn, &c.), or his eminent companions ('Omar, 'Osmán, 'Amr, &c.), or some of the prophets and patriarchs of early times (as Ibráheem, Is-ḥák, Isma'eel, Yaaḳoob, Moosa, Dáood, Suleymán, &c.), or receive a name signifying "Servant of God," "Servant of the Compassionate," "Servant of the Powerful," &c. ('Abd-Allah, 'Abd-er-

* The words of the adán and the ikámeh will be given in a subsequent page.

† Literally, "the son of his paternal uncle."

Rahmán, 'Abd-el-Kádir). Girls are mostly named after the wives or the favourite daughter of the Arabian Prophet, or after others of his family (as Khadeegeh, A'isheh, A'm'neh, Fát'meh, Zeyneb), or are distinguished by a name implying that they are "beloved," "blessed," "precious," &c. (Mahboobeh, Mebrookeh, Nefeseh, &c.), or the name of a flower, or of some other pleasing object.*

As the proper name does not necessarily or generally descend from parent to child, persons are usually distinguished by one or more surnames, of the following kinds :—a surname of relationship ;† as "Aboo-'Alee"‡ (Father of 'Alee), "Ibn-Aḥmad" (Son of Aḥmad), &c. :—a surname of honour, or a nickname ;§ as "Noor-ed-Deen" (The Light of the Religion), "Et-Taweel" (The Tall), &c. :—an appellation relating to country, birth-place, origin, family, sect, trade, or occupation, &c. ;¶ as "Er-Rasheedee" (of the town of Rasheed), "Eş-Şabbágh" (The Dyer), "Et-Tágir" (The Merchant). The second kind of surname, and that relating to country, &c., are often inherited ; thus becoming family-names. Each kind of surname is now generally placed *after* the proper name.

The dress of the children of the middle and higher orders is similar to that of the parents, but generally slovenly. The children of the poor are either clad in a shirt and a cotton skull-cap or a ṭarboosh, or (as is mostly the case in the villages) are left quite naked until the age of six or seven years or more, unless a bit of rag can be easily obtained to serve them as a partial covering. Those little girls who have only a piece of ragged stuff not

* In Cairo, it is the fashion to change the first five female names here mentioned, and the last, into Khaddoogeh, 'Eiyoosheh, Ammoonah, Faṭtoonah, Zennoonah, and Nefsoosheh ; and some other names are changed to the same "measure" as these ; which measure implies, in these cases, a superior degree of dignity.

† This is termed "kunya."

‡ On an improper use of this kind of surname, see a note towards the close of Chapter IV. in this Volume.

§ Termed "laḳab."

¶ Termed "nisbeh," or "ism mensoob ;" or an appellation resembling an "ism mensoob."

large enough to cover both the head and body, generally prefer wearing it upon the head, and sometimes have the coquetry to draw a part of it before the face, as a veil, while the whole body is exposed. Little ladies, four or five years of age, mostly wear the white face-veil, like their mothers. When a boy is two or three years old, or often earlier, his head is shaven; a tuft of hair only being left on the crown, and another over the forehead :* the heads of female infants are seldom shaven. The young children, of both sexes, are usually carried by their mothers and nurses, not in the arms, but on the shoulder, seated astride,† and sometimes, for a short distance, on the hip.

In the treatment of their children, the women of the wealthier classes are remarkable for their excessive indulgence; and the poor, for the little attention they bestow, beyond supplying the absolute wants of nature. The mother is prohibited, by the Muslim law, from weaning her child before the expiration of two years from the period of its birth, unless with the consent of her husband, which, I am told, is generally given after the first year or eighteen months. In the houses of the wealthy, the child, whether boy or girl, remains almost constantly confined in the harem (or the women's apartments), or, at least, in the house: sometimes the boy continues thus an effeminate prisoner until a master, hired to instruct him daily, has taught him to read and write. But it is important to observe, that an affectionate respect for parents and elders inculcated in the harem fits the boy for an abrupt introduction into the world, as

* It is customary among the peasants throughout a great part of Egypt, on the first occasion of shaving a child's head, to slay a victim, generally a goat, at the tomb of some saint in or near their village, and to make a feast with the meat, of which their friends, and any other persons who please, partake. This is most common in Upper Egypt, and among the tribes not very long established on the banks of the Nile. Their Pagan ancestors in Arabia observed this custom, and usually gave, as alms to the poor, the weight of the hair in silver or gold. The victim is called "aḳeeḳah," and is offered as a ransom for the child from hell. The custom of shaving one part of a child's head and leaving another was forbidden by the Prophet.

† See Isaiah, xlix. 22.

will presently be shown. When the ladies go out to pay a visit, or to take an airing, mounted on asses, the children generally go with them, each carried by a female slave or servant, or seated between her knees upon the fore part of the saddle; the female attendants, as well as the ladies, being usually borne by asses, and it being the custom of all the women to sit astride. But it is seldom that the children of the rich enjoy this slight diversion; their health suffers from confinement and pampering, and they are often rendered capricious, proud, and selfish. The women of the middle classes are scarcely less indulgent mothers. The estimation in which the wife is held by her husband, and even by her acquaintance, depends, in a great degree, upon her fruitfulness, and upon the preservation of her children; for by men and women, rich and poor, barrenness is still considered, in the East, a curse and a reproach; and it is regarded as disgraceful in a man to divorce, without some cogent reason, a wife who has borne him a child, especially while her child is living. If, therefore, a woman desire her husband's love, or the respect of others, her giving birth to a child is a source of great joy to herself and him, and her own interest alone is a sufficient motive for maternal tenderness. Very little expense is required, in Egypt, for the maintenance of a numerous offspring.*

However much the children are caressed and fondled, in general they feel and manifest a most profound and praiseworthy respect for their parents. Disobedience to parents is considered by the Muslims as one of the greatest of sins, and classed, in point of heinousness, with six other sins, which are idolatry, murder, falsely accusing modest women of adultery, wasting the property of orphans, taking usury, and desertion in an expedition against infidels. An undutiful child is very seldom heard of among the Egyptians or the Arabs in general. Among the middle and higher classes, the child usually greets the father in the morning by kissing his hand, and

* It is mentioned by Diodorus Siculus (lib. i. cap. 20), that the ancient Egyptians clothed and reared their children at a very trifling expense.

then stands before him in an humble attitude, with the left hand covered by the right, to receive any order, or to await his permission to depart; but after the respectful kiss, is often taken on the lap; and nearly the same respect is shown towards the mother. Other members of the family, according to age, relationship, and station, are also similarly regarded by the young; and hence arise that ease and propriety with which a child, emerging from the *harem*, conducts himself in every society, and that loyalty which is often improperly regarded as the result of Eastern despotism.* Sons scarcely ever sit, or eat, or smoke, in the presence of the father, unless bidden to do so; and they often even wait upon him, and upon his guests, at meals and on other occasions: they do not cease to act thus when they have become men.—I once partook of breakfast with an Egyptian merchant, before the door of his house, in the month of *Ramādān* (and therefore a little after sunset); and though every person who passed by, however poor, was invited to partake of the meal, we were waited upon by two of my host's sons; the elder about forty years of age. As they had been fasting during the whole of the day, and had as yet only taken a draught of water, I begged the father to allow them to sit down and eat with us: he immediately told them that they might do so, but they declined.—The mothers generally enjoy, in a greater degree than the fathers, the affection of their children; though they do not receive from them equal outward marks of respect. I have often known servants to hoard their wages for their mothers, though seldom for their fathers.

With the exception of those of the wealthier classes, the young children in Egypt, though objects of so much solicitude, are generally very dirty, and shabbily clad. The stranger here is disgusted by the sight of them, and at once condemns the modern Egyptians as a very filthy people, without requiring any other reason for forming

* "The structure of the Eastern government is but the enlargement of the paternal roof." (Urquhart's '*Spirit of the East*,' vol. ii. p. 249.)

such an opinion of them ; but it is often the case that those children who are most petted and beloved are the dirtiest and worst clad. It is not uncommon to see, in the city in which I am writing, a lady shuffling along in her ample *tób* and *habarah* of new and rich and glistening silks, and one who scents the whole street with the odour of musk or civet as she passes along, with all that appears of her person scrupulously clean and delicate, her eyes neatly bordered with *kohl* applied in the most careful manner, and the tip of a finger or two showing the fresh dye of the *henna*, and by her side a little boy or girl, her own child, with a face besmeared with dirt, and with clothes appearing as though they had been worn for months without being washed. Few things surprised me so much as sights of this kind on my first arrival in this country. I naturally inquired the cause of what struck me as so strange and inconsistent, and was informed that the affectionate mothers thus neglected the appearance of their children, and purposely left them unwashed, and clothed them so shabbily, particularly when they had to take them out in public, *from fear of the evil eye*, which is excessively dreaded, and especially in the case of children, since they are generally esteemed the greatest of blessings, and therefore most likely to be coveted. It is partly for the same reason that many of them confine their boys so long in the *hareem*. Some mothers even dress their young sons as girls, because the latter are less obnoxious to envy.

The children of the poor have a yet more neglected appearance : besides being very scantily clad, or quite naked, they are, in general, excessively dirty : their eyes are frequently extremely filthy : it is common to see half-a-dozen or more flies in each eye, unheeded and unmolested. The parents consider it extremely injurious to wash or even touch the eyes, when they discharge that acrid humour which attracts the flies : they even affirm that the loss of sight would result from frequently touching or washing them when thus affected ; though washing is really one of the best means of alleviating the complaint.

At the age of about five or six years, or sometimes

later, the boy is circumcised.* Previously to the performance of this rite in the metropolis and other towns of Egypt, the parents of the youth, if not in indigent circumstances, generally cause him to be paraded through several streets in the neighbourhood of their dwelling. They mostly avail themselves of the occurrence of a bridal procession, to lessen the expenses of the parade: and, in this case, the boy and his attendants lead the procession. He generally wears a red Kashmeer turban; but in other respects is dressed as a girl, with a yelek and salṭah, and with a kūrṣ, ṣafa, and other female ornaments, to attract the eye, and so divert it from his person.† These articles of dress are of the richest description that can be procured: they are usually borrowed from some lady, and much too large to fit the boy. A horse, handsomely caparisoned, is also borrowed to convey him; and in his hand is placed a folded embroidered handkerchief, which he constantly holds before his mouth in his right hand, to hide part of his face, and thus protect himself from the evil eye. He is preceded by a servant of the barber, who is the operator, and by three or more musicians, whose instruments are commonly a hautboy and drums. The foremost person in the procession is generally the barber's servant, bearing his "ḥeml," which is a case of wood, of a semi-cylindrical form, with four short legs; its front (the flat surface) covered with pieces of looking-glass and embossed brass; and its back with a curtain. This is merely the barber's sign: the servant carries it in the manner represented in the engraving here inserted. The musicians follow next (or some of them precede the "ḥeml"), and then follows the boy; his horse led by a groom. Behind him walk several of his female relations and friends. Two boys are often paraded together, and sometimes borne by one horse. Of the bridal processions, with which that above described is so often united, an account will be found in

* Among the peasants, not unfrequently at the age of twelve, thirteen, or fourteen years.

† For a description of the ornaments here mentioned see the Appendix: the kūrṣ and ṣafa are also represented in a preceding engraving, page 70.



Parade previous to Circumcision.

the proper place. A description, also, of some further customs observed on the occasion of a circumcision, and particularly of a more genteel but less general mode of celebrating that event, will be given in another Chapter, relating to various private festivities.*

The parents seldom devote much of their time or attention to the intellectual education of their children; generally contenting themselves with instilling into their young minds a few principles of religion, and then submitting them, if they can afford to do so, to the instruction of a schoolmaster. As early as possible, the child is taught to say, "I testify that there is no deity but God; and I testify that Mohámmad is God's Apostle." He receives also lessons of religious pride, and learns to hate the Christians, and all other sects but his own, as thoroughly as does the Muslim in advanced age. Most of the children of the higher and middle classes, and some of those of the lower orders, are taught by the schoolmaster to read, and to recite and chant† the whole or certain portions of the K̄ur-án by memory.‡ They afterwards learn the most common rules of arithmetic.

Schools are very numerous, not only in the metropolis, but in every large town; and there is one, at least, in every considerable village. Almost every mosque, "sebeel" (or public fountain), and "hód" (or drinking-place for cattle) in the metropolis has a "kuttáb" (or school) attached to it, in which children are instructed

* A custom mentioned by Strabo (p. 824), as prevailing among the Egyptians in his time, is still universally practised in every part of Egypt, both by the Muslims and Copts, excepting in Alexandria and perhaps a few other places on the shore of the Mediterranean: it is also common, if not equally prevalent, in Arabia. Reland, who imperfectly describes this custom ('De Religione Mohammedica,' p. 75, edit. 1717), remarks its being mentioned likewise by Galen.

† See Chapter XIV., on Music.

‡ It has been said that I have represented the Egyptian boys as being very generally perfect in *understanding* the K̄ur-án. If the reader can find in this work any expression implying so monstrous an untruth, I shall be obliged if he will erase it. I have stated, in Chapter IX., that the exposition of the K̄ur-án is a branch of *collegiate* education.

for a very trifling expense; the "sheykh" or fikce"* (the master of the school) receiving from the parent of each pupil half a piaster (about five farthings of our money), or something more or less, every Thursday.† The master of a school attached to a mosque or other public building in Cairo also generally receives yearly a tarboosh, a piece of white muslin for a turban, a piece of linen, and a pair of shoes; and each boy receives, at the same time, a linen skull-cap, four or five cubits‡ of cotton cloth, and perhaps half a piece (ten or twelve cubits) of linen, and a pair of shoes, and, in some cases, half a piaster or a piaster. These presents are supplied



A School-boy learning the Alphabet.

by funds bequeathed to the school, and are given in the month of Ramadán. The boys attend only during the hours of instruction, and then return to their homes. The lessons are generally written upon tablets of wood,

* This term is a corruption of "fakceh," which latter appellation is generally given in Egypt only to a person deeply versed in religion and law; a man who merely recites the Kur-án, &c. professionally, or who teaches others to do so, being commonly called a "fikce."

† Friday, being the sabbath of the Muslims, is a holiday to the school-boys and fikce.

‡ The cubit employed in measuring Egyptian cloths is equal to twenty-two inches and two-thirds.

painted white ; and when one lesson is learnt, the tablet is washed and another is written. They also practise writing upon the same tablet. The schoolmaster and his pupils sit upon the ground, and each boy has his tablet in his hands, or a copy of the *Kur-án*, or of one of its thirty sections, on a little kind of desk of palm-sticks. All who are learning to read recite or chant their lessons aloud, at the same time rocking their heads or bodies incessantly backwards and forwards ; which practice is observed by almost all persons in reciting the *Kur-án* ; being thought to assist the memory. The noise may be imagined.*

The boys first learn the letters of the alphabet ; next, the vowel-points and other orthographical marks ; and then, the numerical value of each letter of the alphabet.† Previously to this third stage of the pupil's progress, it is customary for the master to ornament the tablet with black and red ink, and green paint, and to write upon it the letters of the alphabet in the order of their respective numerical values, and convey it to the father, who returns it with a piaster or two placed upon it. The like is also done at several subsequent stages of the boy's progress, as when he begins to learn the *Kur-án*, and six or seven times as he proceeds in learning the sacred book ; each time the next lesson being written on the tablet. When he has become acquainted with the numerical values of the letters, the master writes for him some simple words, as the names of men ; then, the ninety-nine names or epithets of God : next, the *Fat'hah*, or opening chapter of the *Kur-án*, is written upon his tablet, and he reads it repeatedly until he has perfectly committed it to memory. He then proceeds to learn the other chapters of the *Kur-án* : after the first chapter he learns the last ; then the last but one ; next the last but two, and so on, in inverted order, ending with the second ; as the chapters in general successively decrease in length from the second to the last inclusively.

* The usual punishment is beating on the soles of the feet with a palm-stick.

† The Arabic letters are often used as numerals.

It is seldom that the master of a school teaches writing ; and few boys learn to write unless destined for some employment which absolutely requires that they should do so ; in which latter case they are generally taught the art of writing, and likewise arithmetic, by a “ kab-bánee,” who is a person employed to weigh goods in a market or bázár with the steelyard. Those who are to devote themselves to religion, or to any of the learned professions, mostly pursue a regular course of study in the great mosque El-Azhar.

The schoolmasters in Egypt are mostly persons of very little learning : few of them are acquainted with any writings except the Kur-án, and certain prayers, which, as well as the contents of the sacred volume, they are hired to recite on particular occasions. I was lately told of a man who could neither read nor write succeeding to the office of a schoolmaster in my neighbourhood. Being able to recite the whole of the Kur-án, he could hear the boys repeat their lessons : to write them, he employed the “ ’areef ” (or head boy and monitor in the school), pretending that his eyes were weak. A few days after he had taken upon himself this office, a poor woman brought a letter for him to read to her from her son, who had gone on pilgrimage. The fíkee pretended to read it, but said nothing ; and the woman, inferring from his silence that the letter contained bad news, said to him, “ Shall I shriek ? ” He answered “ Yes.” “ Shall I tear my clothes ? ” she asked ; he replied “ Yes.” So the poor woman returned to her house, and with her assembled friends performed the lamentation and other ceremonies usual on the occasion of a death. Not many days after this, her son arrived, and she asked him what he could mean by causing a letter to be written stating that he was dead ? He explained the contents of the letter, and she went to the schoolmaster and begged him to inform her why he had told her to shriek and to tear her clothes, since the letter was to inform her that her son was well, and he was now arrived at home. Not at all abashed, he said, “ God knows futurity ! How could I know that

your son would arrive in safety? It was better that you should think him dead than be led to expect to see him and perhaps be disappointed." Some persons who were sitting with him praised his wisdom, exclaiming, "Truly, our new fikée is a man of unusual judgment!" and, for a little while, he found that he had raised his reputation by this blunder.*

Some parents employ a sheykh or fikée to teach their boys at home. The father usually teaches his son to perform the "wudoó," and other ablutions, and to say his prayers, and instructs him in other religious and moral duties to the best of his ability. The Prophet directed his followers to order their children to say their prayers when seven years of age, and to beat them if they did not do so when ten years old; and at the latter age to make them sleep in separate beds: in Egypt, however, very few persons pray before they have attained to manhood.

The female children are very seldom taught to read or write; and not many of them, even among the higher orders, learn to say their prayers. Some of the rich engage a "sheykhah" (or learned woman) to visit the hareem daily; to teach their daughters and female slaves to say their prayers, and to recite a few chapters of the Kur-án; and sometimes to instruct them in reading and writing; but these are very rare accomplishments for females even of the highest class in Egypt.† There are many schools in which girls are taught plain needlework, embroidery, &c. In families in easy circumstances a "m'allimeh,"‡ or female teacher of such kinds of work, is often engaged to attend the girls at their own home.

* I have since found an anecdote almost exactly similar to the above in the Cairo edition of the 'Thousand and One Nights:' therefore either my informant's account is not strictly true, or the man alluded to by him was, in the main, an imitator: the latter is not improbable, as I have been credibly informed of several similar imitations, and of one which I know to be a fact.

† The young daughters of persons of the middle classes are sometimes instructed with the boys in a public school; but they are usually veiled, and hold no intercourse with the boys. I have often seen a well-dressed girl reading the Kur-án in a boys' school.

‡ Thus pronounced for "mo'allimeh."

CHAPTER III.

RELIGION AND LAWS.

As the most important branch of their education, and the main foundation of their manners and customs, the religion and laws of the people who are the subject of these pages must be well understood,—not only in their general principles, but in many minor points,—before we can proceed to consider their social condition and habits in the state of manhood.

A difference of opinion among Muslims, respecting some points of religion and law, has given rise to four sects, which consider each other orthodox as to fundamental matters, and call themselves “Sunnees,” or followers of the Traditions, while they designate all other Muslims by the term “Shiya’ees,” signifying, according to their acceptation, “heretics.” The Sunnees alone are the class which we have to consider. The four sects into which they are divided are the “Hanafees,” “Sháfe’ees,” “Málikees,”* and “Hambel’ees,”—so called from the names of the respective doctors whose tenets they have adopted. The Turks are of the first sect, which is the most reasonable: the inhabitants of Cairo, a small proportion excepted (who are Hanafees), are either Sháfe’ees or Málikees; and it is generally said that they are mostly of the former of these sects, as are also the people of Arabia: those of the Sharkeeyeh, on the east of the Delta, Sháfe’ees: those of the Garbeeyeh, or Delta, Sháfe’ees, with a few Málikees: those of the Boheyreh, on the west of the Delta, Málikees: the inhabitants of the Sa’eed, or the valley of Upper Egypt, are likewise, with few exceptions, Málikees: so also are

* Commonly pronounced “Mál’kee.”

the Nubians, and the Western Arabs. To the fourth sect, very few persons in the present day belong.—All these sects agree in deriving their code of religion and law from four sources; namely, the *Kur-án*, the Traditions of the Prophet, the concordance of his early disciples, and analogy.

The religion which Mohammad taught is generally called by the Arabs "*Ēl-Islám*," "*Eemán*" and "*Deen*" are the particular terms applied, respectively, to faith and practical religion.

The grand principles of the faith are expressed in two articles; the first of which is this—

"There is no deity but God."

God, who created all things in heaven and in earth, who preserveth all things, and decreeth all things, who is without beginning, and without end, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, is *one*. His unity is thus declared in a short chapter of the *Kur-án* :* "*Say, He is God; one [God]. God is the Eternal. He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; and there is none equal unto Him.*" He hath no partner, nor any offspring, in the creed of the Muslim. Though Jesus Christ (whose name should not be mentioned without adding—"on whom be peace") is believed to have been born of a pure virgin, by the miraculous operation of God,† without any natural father,—to be the Messiah, and "the Word of God, which he transmitted unto Mary, and a Spirit [proceeding] from Him"‡—yet he is not called the Son of God; and no higher titles are given to him than those of a Prophet and Apostle: he is even consi-

* Ch. 112.—In quoting passages in the *Kur-án*, I have sometimes followed Sale's translation; to the general fidelity of which I willingly add my testimony. I should, however, mention, that some of his explanatory notes are unauthorized and erroneous: as, for instance, with respect to the laws of inheritance; on which subject his version of the text also is faulty. When necessary, I have distinguished the verses by numbers. In doing this I had originally adopted the divisions made by Maracci, but have since made the numbers to agree with those in the late edition of the Arabic text by Fluegel, which, from its superior accuracy, is likely to supersede the former editions.

† *Kur-án*, ch. iii., vv. 40—42.

‡ *Kur-án*, ch. iv., v. 169.

dered of inferior dignity to Mohammad, inasmuch as the Gospel is held to be superseded by the Kur-án. The Muslim believes that Seyyidna 'Eesa * (or "our Lord Jesus"), after he had fulfilled the object of his mission, was taken up unto God from the Jews, who sought to slay him; and that another person, on whom God had stamped the likeness of Christ, was crucified in his stead.† He also believes that Christ is to come again upon the earth, to establish the Muslim religion, and perfect peace and security, after having killed Antichrist, and to be a sign of the approach of the last day.

The other grand article of the faith, which cannot be believed without the former, is this—

"Mohammad is God's Apostle."

Mohammad is believed, by his followers, to have been the last and greatest of Prophets and Apostles.‡ Six of these—namely, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammad—are believed each to have received a revealed law, or system of religion and morality. That, however, which was revealed to Adam was abrogated by the next; and each succeeding law, or code of laws, abrogated the preceding; though all are believed to have been the same in every essential point: therefore, those who profess the Jewish religion from the time of Moses to that of Jesus were true believers; and those who professed the Christian religion (uncorrupted, as the Muslims say, by the tenet that Christ was the *son* of God) until the time of Mohammad are held, in like manner, to have been true believers. But the copies of the Pentateuch, the Psalms of David (which the Muslims also hold to be of divine origin), and the Gospels now existing, are believed to have been so much altered as to contain very little of the true word of God. The Kur-án is believed to have suffered no alteration whatever.

* The title of "Seyyidna" (our Lord) is given by the Muslims to prophets and other venerated persons.

† Kur-án, ch. iv., v. 156.

‡ The Muslim seldom mentions the name of the Prophet without adding, "Salla-lláhu 'aleyhi wa-sellem:" i. e., "God favour and preserve him!"

It is further necessary that the Muslim should believe in the existence of angels, and of good and evil genii; the evil genii being devils, whose chief is Iblees; * also, in the immortality of the soul, the general resurrection and judgment, in future rewards and punishments in Paradise † and Hell, ‡ in the balance in which good and evil works shall be weighed, and in the bridge “Eṣ-Sirāt” (which extends over the midst of Hell, finer than a hair, and sharper than the edge of a sword), over which all must pass, and from which the wicked shall fall into Hell. He believes, also, that they who have acknowledged the faith of El-Islām and yet acted wickedly will not remain in Hell for ever; but that all of other religions must: that there are, however, degrees of punishments, as well as of rewards,—the former consisting in severe torture by excessive heat and cold, and the latter, partly in the indulgence of the appetites by most delicious meats and drinks, and in the pleasures afforded by the company of the girls of Paradise, whose eyes will be very large and entirely black, § and whose stature will be proportioned to that of the men, which will be the height of a tall palm-tree, or about sixty feet. Such, the Muslims generally believe, was the height of our first parents. It is said that the souls of martyrs reside, until the judgment, in the crops of green birds, which eat of the fruits of Paradise and drink of its rivers. || Women are not to be excluded from Paradise, according to the faith of El-Islām; though it has been asserted, by

* In the first edition of this work, I here mentioned *the Devil* as distinct from the genii; but I have since found that the majority of the most esteemed Arab authors are of the contrary opinion. Theirs is also the *general* opinion of the *modern* Arabs.—The angelic nature is considered as inferior to the human (because the angels were commanded to prostrate themselves before Adam), and still more so is the nature of genii.

† “El-Genneh,” or the garden.

‡ “Gahennem.”

§ Like those of the gazelle: this meaning of their common appellation (which is mentioned afterwards) is, however, disputed.

|| The title of martyr is given to the unpaid soldier killed in a war for the defence of the faith, to a person who innocently meets with his death from the hand of another, to a victim of the plague (if he has not fled from the disease) or of dysentery, to a person who is drowned, and to one who is killed by the fall of any building.

many Christians, that the Muslims believe women to have no souls. In several places in the *Kur-án*, Paradise is promised to all true believers, whether males or females. It is the doctrine of the *Kur-án* that no person will be admitted into Paradise by his own merits; but that admission will be granted to the believers merely by the mercy of God, on account of their faith; yet that the felicity of each person will be proportioned to his good works. The very meanest in Paradise is promised "eighty-thousand servants" (beautiful youths, called "weleeds"),* "seventy-two wives of the girls of Paradise" ("hooreeyehs,"),† "besides the wives he had in this world," if he desire to have the latter (and the good will doubtless desire the good), "and a tent erected for him of pearls, jacinths, and emeralds, of a very large extent;" "and will be waited on by three hundred attendants while he eats, and served in dishes of gold, whereof three hundred shall be set before him at once, each containing a different kind of food, the last morsel of which will be as grateful as the first." Wine also, "though forbidden in this life, will yet be freely allowed to be drunk in the next, and without danger, since the wine of Paradise will not inebriate."‡ We are further told, that all superfluities from the bodies of the inhabitants of Paradise will be carried off by perspiration, which will diffuse an odour like that of musk; and that they will be clothed in the richest silks, chiefly of green. They are also promised perpetual youth, and children as many as they may desire. These pleasures, together with the songs of the angel *Isráfeel*, and many other gratifications of the senses, will charm even the meanest inhabitant of Paradise. But all these enjoyments will be lightly esteemed by those more blessed persons who are to be admitted to the highest of all honours—that spiritual pleasure of beholding, morning and evening, the face of God.§—The Muslim must also believe in the

* Or "wildán."

† Or "el-hoor el-'een" or "el-hoor el-'oyoon."

‡ See *Salé's Preliminary Discourse* to his translation of the *Kur-án*, sect. iv.

§ A Muslim of some learning professed to me that he considered the

examination of the dead, in the sepulchre, by two angels, called Munkar and Nekeer,* of terrible aspect, who will cause the body (to which the soul shall, for the time, be re-united) to sit upright in the grave,† and will question the deceased respecting his faith. The wicked they will severely torture; but the good they will not hurt. Lastly, he should believe in God's absolute decree of every event, both good and evil. This doctrine has given rise to as much controversy among the Muslims as among Christians; but the former, generally, believe in predestination as, in some respects, conditional.

The most important duties enjoined in the *ritual and moral laws* are *prayer, alms-giving, fasting, and pilgrimage*.

The religious *purifications*, which are of two kinds,—first, the ordinary ablution preparatory to *prayer*, and secondly, the washing of the whole body, together with the performance of the former ablution,—are of primary importance; for prayer, which is a duty so important that it is called “the Key of Paradise,” will not be accepted from a person in a state of uncleanness. It is therefore also necessary to avoid impurity by clipping the nails, and other similar practices.‡

There are partial washings, or purifications, which all Muslims perform on certain occasions, even if they neglect their prayers, and which are considered as religious acts. § The ablution called “el-wuḍoó,” which is preparatory to prayer, I shall now describe. The purifications just before alluded to are a part of the wuḍoó: the other washings are not, of necessity, to be performed immediately after, but only when the person is about to say his prayers; and these are performed in the mosque

description of Paradise given in the *Kur-án*, to be in a great measure figurative: “like those,” said he, “in the book of the Revelation of St. John;” and he assured me that many learned Muslims were of the same opinion.

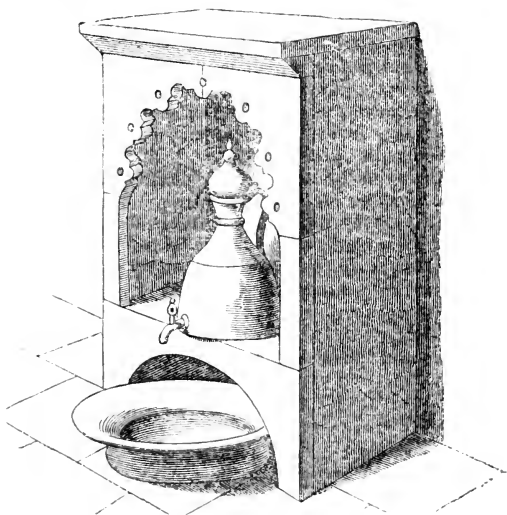
* Vulgarly called “Nákir” and “Nekeer.”

† The corpse is always deposited in a vault, and not placed in a coffin, but merely wrapped in winding-sheets or clothes.

‡ Alluded to in Chapter I.

§ For an account of these private ablutions, and the occasions which require their performance, the reader may consult Reland, ‘*De Rel. Moh.*’ pp. 80—83, ed. 1717.

or in the house, in public or in private. There is in every mosque a tank (called "meydaäh") or a "ḥanafeeyeh," which is a raised reservoir, with spouts round it, from which the water falls. In some mosques there are both these. The Muslims of the Ḥanafee sect (of which are the Turks) perform the ablution at the latter (which has received its name from that cause); for they must do it with running water, or from a tank or pool at least ten cubits in breadth, and the same in depth; and I believe that there is only one meydaäh in Cairo of that depth, which is in the great mosque El-Azhar. A small ḥanafeeyeh of tinned copper, placed on a low shelf, and a large basin, or a small ewer and basin of the same metal, are generally used in the house for the performance of the wuḍoó.



Vessels for Ablution.—The upper vessel (or ḥanafeeyeh) is generally about a foot and a half in height.

The person, having tucked up his sleeves a little higher than his elbows, says, in a low voice, or inaudibly, "I purpose performing the wuḍoó, for prayer."* He then washes his hands three times; saying, in the same manner as before, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful! Praise be to God, who hath sent down water for purification, and made El-Islám to be a light and a conductor, and a guide to thy gardens, the gardens of delight, and to thy mansion, the mansion of peace." Then he rinses his mouth three times, throwing the water into it with his right hand;† and in doing this he says, "O God, assist me in the reading of thy book, and in commemorating Thee, and in thanking Thee, and in worshipping Thee well!" Next, with his right hand, he throws water up his nostrils (snuffing it up at the same time), and then blows it out, compressing his nostrils with the thumb and finger of the *left* hand; and this also is done three times. While doing it, he says, "O God, make me to smell the odours of Paradise, and bless me with its delights; and make me not to smell the smell of the fires [of Hell]." He then washes his face three times, throwing up the water with both hands, and saying, "O God, whiten my face with thy light, on the day when Thou shalt whiten the faces of thy favourites; and do not blacken my face, on the day when Thou shalt blacken the faces of thine enemies."‡ His right hand and arm, as high as the elbow, he next washes three times, and as many times causes some water to run along his arm, from the palm of the hand to the elbow, saying, as he does this, "O God, give me my book in my right hand;§ and reckon with me with an easy reckoning." In the same manner he washes the left hand

* All persons do not use exactly the same words on this occasion, nor during the performance of the wuḍoó; and most persons use no words during the performance.

† He should also use a tooth-stick (miswák) to clean his teeth; but few do so.

‡ It is believed that the good man will rise to judgment with his face white; and the bad with his face black. Hence a man's face is said to be white or black according as he is in good or bad repute; and "may God blacken thy face!" is a common imprecation.

§ To every man is appropriated a book, in which all the actions of his

and arm saying, "O God, do not give me my book in my left hand, nor behind my back; and do not reckon with me with a difficult reckoning; nor make me to be one of the people of the fire." He next draws his wetted right hand over the upper part of his head, raising his turban or cap with his left: this he does but once; and he accompanies the action with this supplication, "O God, cover me with thy mercy, and pour down thy blessing upon me; and shade me under the shadow of thy canopy, on the day when there shall be no shade but its shade." If he have a beard, he then combs it with the wetted fingers of his right hand; holding his hand with the palm forwards, and passing the fingers through his beard from the throat upwards. He then puts the tips of his fore-fingers into his ears, and twists them round, passing his thumbs at the same time round the back of the ears, from the bottom upwards; and saying, "O God, make me to be of those who hear what is said, and obey what is best;" or "O God, make me to hear good." Next he wipes his neck with the back of the fingers of both hands, making the ends of his fingers meet behind his neck, and then drawing them forward; and in doing so, he says, "O God, free my neck from the fire; and keep me from the chains, and the collars, and the fetters." Lastly, he washes his feet, as high as the ankles, and passes his fingers between the toes: he washes the right foot first, saying, at the same time, "O God, make firm my feet upon the Širát, on the day when feet shall slip upon it:" on washing the left foot, he says, "O God, make my labour to be approved, and my sin forgiven, and my works accepted, merchandise that shall not perish, by thy pardon, O Mighty! O very Forgiving! by thy mercy, O most Merciful of those who show mercy!" After having thus completed the ablution, he says, looking towards heaven, "Thy perfection, O God! [I extol] with thy praise: I testify that there is no deity but Thou alone: Thou hast no

life are written. The just man, it is said, will receive his book in his right hand; but the wicked, in his left, which will be tied behind his back; his right hand being tied up to his neck.

companion: I implore thy forgiveness, and turn to Thee with repentance." Then, looking towards the earth, he adds, "I testify that there is no deity but God: and I testify that Moḥammad is his servant and his apostle." Having uttered these words, he should recite once, twice, or three times, the "Soorat el-Ḳadr," or 97th chapter of the Kur-án.

The wuḍoó is generally performed in less than two minutes; most persons hurrying through the act, as well as omitting almost all the prayers, &c. which should accompany and follow the actions. It is not required before each of the five daily prayers, when the person is *conscious* of having avoided every kind of impurity since the last performance of this ablution. When water cannot be easily procured, or would be injurious to the health of the individual, he may perform the ablution with dust or sand. This ceremony is called "tayemmum." The person, in this case, strikes the palms of his hands upon any dry dust or sand (it will suffice to do so upon his cloth robe, as it must contain some dust), and with both hands, wipes his face: then, having struck his hands again upon the dust, he wipes his right hand and arm as high as the elbow; and then, the left hand and arm, in the same manner. This completes the ceremony. The washing of the whole body is often performed merely for the sake of cleanliness; but not as a religious act, excepting on particular occasions—as on the morning of Friday, and on the two grand festivals, &c.,* when it is called "ghusl."

Cleanliness is required not only in the worshipper, but also in the ground, mat, carpet, robe, or whatever else it be, upon which he prays. Persons of the lower orders often pray upon the bare ground, which is considered clean if it be dry; and they seldom wipe off immediately the dust which adheres to the nose and forehead in prostration; for it is regarded as ornamental to the believer's face: but when a person has a cloak or any other gar-

* Here, again, I must beg to refer the reader (if he desire such information) to Reland's account of the ghusl, and the occasions which require its performance.—'De Rel. Moh.' pp. 66, 67, ed. 1717.

ment that he can take off without exposing his person in an unbecoming manner, he spreads it upon the ground to serve as a prayer-carpet. The rich use a prayer-carpet (called "seggádeh") about the size of a wide hearth-rug, having a niche represented upon it, the point of which is turned towards Mekkeh.* It is reckoned sinful to pass near before a person engaged in prayer.

Prayer is called "ṣalah." Five times in the course of every day is its performance required of the Muslim: but there are comparatively few persons in Egypt who do not sometimes or often neglect this duty; and many who scarcely ever pray. Certain portions of the ordinary prayers are called "farḍ," which are appointed by the Kur-án; and others, "sunneh," which are appointed by the Prophet, without allegation of a divine order.

The first time of prayer commences at the "maghrib," or sunset,† or rather, about four minutes later; the second, at the "'eshë," or nightfall, when the evening has closed, and it is quite dark;‡ the third, at the "ṣubḥ" or "fegr;" i. e., daybreak;§ the fourth, at the "ḍuhr," or noon, or, rather, a little later, when the sun has begun to decline; the fifth, at the "'aṣr," or afternoon; i. e., about mid-time between noon and nightfall. || Each period of prayer ends when the next commences, excepting that of daybreak, which ends at sunrise. The Prophet would not have his followers commence their

* Seggádehs, of the kind here described, are now sold in London, under the name of Persian carpets or Persian rugs.

† I have called this the first, because the Moḥammadan day commences from sunset; but the morning prayer is often termed the first; the prayer of noon, the second; and so on.

‡ The 'eshë of the Sháfe'ees, Málikees, and Hambel'ees is when the red gleam ("esh-shafaḳ el-aḥmar") after sunset has disappeared; and that of the Hanafees, when both the red and the white gleam have disappeared.

§ Generally on the first faint appearance of light in the east. The Hanafees mostly perform the morning-prayer a little later, when the yellow gleam ("el-iṣṣirár") appears: this they deem the most proper time, but they may pray earlier.

|| The 'aṣr, according to the Sháfe'ees, Málikees, and Hambel'ees, is when the shade of an object, cast by the sun, is equal to the length of that object, added to the length of the shade which the same object casts at noon; and, according to the Hanafees, when the shadow is equal to twice the length of the object added to the length of its mid-day shadow.

prayers at sunrise, nor exactly at noon or sunset, because, he said, infidels worshipped the sun at such times.

Should the time of prayer arrive when they are eating, or about to eat, they are not to rise to prayer till they have finished their meal. The prayers should be said, as nearly as possible, at the commencement of the periods above mentioned: they may be said after, but not before. The several times of prayer are announced by the "muëddin" of each mosque. Having ascended to the gallery of the "mád'neh," or menaret, he chants the "adán," or call to prayer, which is as follows: "God is most Great!" (this is said four times.) "I testify that there is no deity but God!" (twice.) "I testify that Mohámmad is God's Apostle!" (twice.) "Come to prayer!" (twice.) "Come to security!" (twice.)* "God is most Great!" (twice.) "There is no deity but God!" —Most of the muëddins of Cairo have harmonious and sonorous voices, which they strain to the utmost pitch: yet there is a simple and solemn melody in their chants which is very striking, particularly in the stillness of night.† *Blind* men are generally preferred for the office of muëddins, that the hareems and terraces of surrounding houses may not be overlooked from the mád'nehs.

Two other calls to prayer are made during the night, to rouse those persons who desire to perform supererogatory acts of devotion.‡ A little after midnight, the muëddins of the great royal mosques in Cairo (*i. e.*, of each of the great mosques founded by a Sultán, which is "Gámè' Sultánee"), and of some other large mosques, ascend the mád'nehs, and chant the following call, which, being one of the two night-calls not at the regular periods of obligatory prayers, is called the "Oola," a term signifying merely the "First." Having commenced by chanting the common adán, with those words which are introduced in the call to morning-prayer ("Prayer is better than sleep"), he adds, "There is no deity but

* Here is added, in the morning call, "Prayer is better than sleep!" (twice.)

† A common air, to which the adán is chanted in Cairo, will be given in the chapter on Egyptian music.

‡ They are few who do so.

God" (three times) "alone: He hath no companion: to Him belongeth the dominion; and to Him belongeth praise. He giveth life, and causeth death; and He is living, and shall never die. In His hand is blessing [or good]; and He is Almighty.—There is no deity but God!" (three times) "and we will not worship any beside Him, 'serving Him with sincerity of religion,'* 'though the infidels be averse'† [thereto]. There is no deity but God. Moḥammad is the most noble of the creation in the sight of God. Moḥammad is the best prophet that hath been sent, and a lord by whom his companions became lords; comely; liberal of gifts; perfect; pleasant to the taste; sweet; soft to the throat [or to be drunk]. Pardon, O Lord, thy servant and thy poor dependant, the endower of this place, and him who watcheth it with goodness and beneficence, and its neighbours, and those who frequent it at the times of prayers and good acts, O thou Bountiful!—O Lord!"‡ (three times.) "Thou art He who ceaseth not to be distinguished by mercy: thou art liberal of thy clemency towards the rebellious; and protectest him; and conceal-est what is foul; and makest manifest every virtuous action; and Thou bestowest thy beneficence upon the servant, and comfortest him, O thou Bountiful!—O Lord!" (three times.) "My sins when I think upon them, [I see to be] many; but the mercy of my Lord is more abundant than are my sins: I am not solicitous on account of good that I have done; but for the mercy of God I am most solicitous. Extolled be the Everlasting! He hath no companion in his great dominion. His perfection [I extol]: exalted be his name: [I extol] the perfection of God."

About an hour before daybreak, the muḥdḍins of most mosques chant the second call, named the "Ebed," and so called from the occurrence of that word near the commencement.§ This call is as follows: "[I extol] the

* Kur-án, ch. xeviii., v. 4.

† Same, ch. ix., v. 32, and ch. lxi., v. 8.

‡ This exclamation ("Yá rabb!") is made in a very loud tone.

§ The word "ebed" is here used adverbially, signifying "for ever."

perfection of God, the Existing for ever and ever" (three times): "the perfection of God, the Desired, the Existing, the Single, the Supreme: the perfection of God, the One, the Sole: the perfection of Him who taketh to himself, in his great dominion, neither female companion, nor male partner, nor any like unto Him, nor any that is disobedient, nor any deputy, nor any equal, nor any offspring. His perfection [I extol]: and exalted be his name! He is a Deity who knew what hath been before it was, and called into existence what hath been; and He is now existing as He was [at the first]. His perfection [I extol]: and exalted be his name! He is a Deity unto whom there is none like existing. There is none like unto God the Bountiful, existing. There is none like unto God, the Clement, existing. There is none like unto God, the Great, existing. And there is no deity but Thou, O our Lord, to be worshipped, and to be praised, and to be desired, and to be glorified. [I extol] the perfection of Him who created all creatures, and numbered them, and distributed their sustenance, and decreed the terms of the lives of his servants: and our Lord, the Bountiful, the Clement, the Great, forgetteth not one of them. [I extol] the perfection of Him who, of his power and greatness, caused the pure water to flow from the solid stone, the mass of rock: the perfection of Him who spake with our lord Moosa [or Moses] upon the mountain;* whereupon the mountain was reduced to dust,† through dread of God, whose name be exalted, the One, the Sole. There is no deity but God. He is a just Judge. [I extol] the perfection of the First. Blessing and peace be on thee, O comely of countenance! O Apostle of God! Blessing and peace be on thee, O first of the creatures of God! and seal of the apostles of God! Blessing and peace be on thee, O thou Prophet! on thee and on thy Family, and all thy

* These words, "The perfection of Him who spake," &c. ("subhāna men kellema," &c.), are pronounced in a very high and loud tone.

† See *Qur-án*, ch. vii., v. 139.

Companions. God is most Great! God is most Great!" &c., to the end of the call to morning-prayer. "O God, favour and preserve and bless the blessed Prophet, our lord Moḥammad! And may God, whose name be blessed and exalted, be well pleased with thee, O our lord El-Ḥasan, and with thee, O our lord El-Ḥoseyn, and with thee, O Aboo-Farrág,* O Sheykh of the Arabs,



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Postures of Prayer. (Part I.)

* "Aboo-Farrág" is a surname of a famous saint, the seyvid Aḥmad El-Bedawee, buried at Tanṭa, in the Delta: it implies that he obtains relief to those who visit his tomb and implore his intercession.

and with all the favourites [the “welees”] of God. Amen.”

The prayers which are performed daily at the five periods before mentioned are said to be of so many “rek’ahs,” or inclinations of the head.*

The worshipper, standing with his face towards the Kibleh (that is, towards Mekkeh), and his feet not quite close together, says, inaudibly, that he has purposed to recite the prayers of so many rek’ahs (sunneh or fard) the morning prayers (or the noon, &c.) of the present day (or night); and then, raising his open hands on each side of his face, and touching the lobes of his ears with the ends of his thumbs, he says, “God is most Great!” (“Alláhu Akbar.”) This ejaculation is called the “tekbeer.” He then proceeds to recite the prayers of the prescribed number of rek’ahs,† thus:—

Still standing, and placing his hands before him, a little below his girdle, the left within the right, he recites (with his eyes directed towards the spot where his head will touch the ground in prostration) the Fát’hah, or opening chapter of the *Kur-án*,‡ and after it three or more other verses, or one of the short chapters, of the *Kur-án*; very commonly the 112th chapter; but without repeating the bismillah (in the name of God, &c.) before the second recitation. He then says, “God is most Great!” and makes, at the same time, an

* The morning-prayers, two rek’ahs sunneh and two fard: the noon, four sunneh and four fard; the afternoon, the same; the evening, three fard and two sunneh; and the night-prayers (or ‘eshē), four sunneh and four fard, and two sunneh again. After these are yet to be performed three rek’ahs “witr;” *i. e.*, single or separate prayers: these may be performed immediately after the ‘eshē prayers, or at any time in the night; but are more meritorious if *late* in the night.

† There are some little differences in the attitudes of the four great sects, during prayer. I describe those of the Hanafees.

‡ Some persons previously utter certain supererogatory ejaculations, expressive of the praise and glory of God; and add, “I seek refuge with God from Satan the accursed;” which petition is often offered up, before reciting any part of the *Kur-án* on other occasions, as commanded by the *Kur-án* itself (ch. xvi., v. 100). The *Kur-án* is usually recited, in the fard prayers, in a voice slightly audible, excepting at noon and the ‘asr, when it is recited inaudibly. By Imáms, when praying at the head of others, and sometimes by persons praying alone, it is chanted. In the sunneh prayers it is recited inaudibly.

inclination of his head and body, placing his hands upon his knees, and separating his fingers a little. In this posture he says, "[I extol] the perfection of my Lord, the Great!" (three times), adding, "May God hear him who praiseth Him. Our Lord, praise be unto Thee!" Then, raising his head and body, he repeats, "God is most Great!" He next drops gently upon his knees, and, saying again, "God is most Great!" places his hands upon the ground, a little before his knees, and



Postures of Prayer. (Part II.)

puts his nose and forehead also to the ground (the former first) between his two hands. During this prostration he says “ [I extol] the perfection of my Lord, the Most High ! ” (three times). He raises his head and body (but his knees remain upon the ground), sinks backwards upon his heels, and places his hands upon his thighs, saying, at the same time, “ God is most Great ! ” and this he repeats as he bends his head a second time to the ground. During this second prostration he repeats the same words as in the first, and in raising his head again, he utters the tekbeer as before. Thus are completed the prayers of one rek’ah. In all the changes of posture, the toes of the right foot must not be moved from the spot where they were first placed, and the left foot should be moved as little as possible.

Having finished the prayers of one rek’ah, the worshipper rises upon his feet (but without moving his toes from the spot where they were, particularly those of the right foot), and repeats the same; only he should recite some other chapter, or portion, after the Fat’hah, than that which he repeated before, as for instance, the 108th chapter.*

After every *second* rek’ah (and after the *last*, though there be an odd number, as in the evening fard), he does not immediately raise his knees from the ground, but bends his left foot under him, and sits upon it, and places his hands upon his thighs, with the fingers a little apart. In this posture, he says, “ Praises are to God, and prayers, and good works. Peace be on thee, O Prophet, and the mercy of God, and his blessings ! Peace be on us, and on [all] the righteous worshippers of God ! ” Then raising the first finger of the right hand† (but not the hand itself), he adds, “ I testify that there is no

* In the third and fourth fard rek’ahs, the recitation of a second portion of the Kūr-án after the Fát’hah should be omitted; and before fard prayers of four rek’ahs, the “ iḳámeh (which consists of the words of the adán, with the addition of “ the time of prayer is come,” pronounced twice after “ come to security”) should be repeated; but most persons neglect doing this, and many do not observe the former rule.

† The doctors of El-Islám differ respecting the proper position of the fingers of the right hand on this occasion: some hold that all the fingers but the first are to be doubled, as represented in Part II. of the sketch of the postures of prayer.

deity but God; and I testify that Moḥammad is his servant and his apostle."

After the *last* rek'ah of each of the prayers, that is, after the sunneh prayers and the fard alike), after saying, "Praises are to God," &c., the worshipper, looking upon his right shoulder, says "Peace be on you, and the mercy of God!" Then looking upon the left, he repeats the same. These salutations are considered by some as addressed only to the guardian angels who watch over the believer, and note all his actions; * but others say that they are addressed both to angels and men (*i. e.* believers only, who may be present; no person, however, returns them. Before the salutations in the *last* prayer, the worshipper may offer up any short petition (in Scriptural language rather than his own); while he does so looking at the palms of his two hands, which he holds like an open book before him, and then draws over his face, from the forehead downwards.

Having finished both the sunneh and fard prayers, the worshipper, if he would acquit himself completely, or rather, perform supererogatory acts, remains sitting (but may then sit more at his ease), and recites the "A'yet el-Kursee," or Throne-Verse, which is the 256th of the 2nd chapter of the *Kur-án*;† and adds, "O High! O Great! Thy perfection [I extol.]" He then repeats, "The perfection of God!" (thirty-three times.) "The perfection of God, the Great, with his praise for ever!" (once.) "Praise be to God!" (thirty-three times.) "Extolled be his dignity! There is no deity but he!" (once.) "God is most Great!" (thirty-three times.) "God is most Great in greatness, and praise be to God in abundance!" (once.) He counts these repetitions with a string of beads called "*sebḥah*" (more properly "*subḥah*"). The beads are ninety-nine, and have a mark between each thirty-three. They are of aloes, or other odoriferous or precious wood, or of coral, or of certain fruit-stones, or seeds, &c.

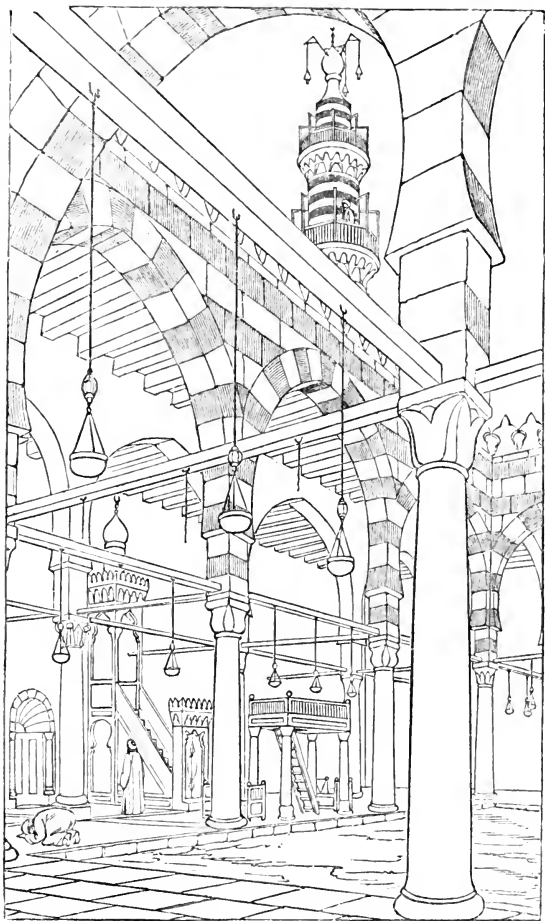
* Some say that every believer is attended by two angels; others say five; others, sixty, or a hundred and sixty.

† Beginning with the words "God; there is no deity but He;" and ending with "He is the High, the Great."

Any wandering of the eyes, or of the mind, a coughing, or the like, answering a question, or any action not prescribed to be performed, must be strictly avoided (unless it be *between* the sunneh prayers and the fard, or be difficult to avoid ; for it is held allowable to make three slight irregular motions, or deviations from correct deportment) ; otherwise the worshipper must begin again, and repeat his prayers with due reverence. It is considered extremely sinful to interrupt a man when engaged in his devotions. The time usually occupied in repeating the prayers of four rek'ahs, without the supererogatory additions, is less than four, or even three, minutes. The Muslim says the five daily prayers in his house or shop, or in the mosque, according as may be most convenient to him : it is seldom that a person goes from his house to the mosque to pray, excepting to join the congregation on Friday. Men of the lower orders oftener pray in the mosques than those who have a comfortable home, and a mat or carpet upon which to pray.

The same prayers are said by the congregation in the mosque on the noon of Friday ; but there are additional rites performed by the Imám and other ministers on this occasion. The chief reasons for fixing upon Friday as the Sabbath of the Muslims were, it is said, because Adam was created on that day, and died on the same day of the week, and because the general resurrection was prophesied to happen on that day ; whence, particularly, Friday was named the day of " El-Gum'ah " (or the assembly). The Muslim does not abstain from worldly business on Friday, excepting during the time of prayer, according to the precept of the *Kur-án*, ch. lxii., vv. 9 and 10.

To form a proper conception of the ceremonials of the Friday-prayers, it is necessary to have some idea of the interior of a mosque. A mosque in which a congregation assembles to perform the Friday-prayers is called " *gámě*." The mosques of Cairo are so numerous, that none of them is inconveniently crowded on the Friday ; and some of them are so large as to occupy spaces three or four hundred feet square. They are mostly built of



Interior of a Mosque.

stone, the alternate courses of which are generally coloured externally red and white. Most commonly a large mosque consists of porticoes surrounding a square open court, in the centre of which is a tank or a fountain for ablution. One side of the building faces the direction of Mekkeh, and the portico on this side, being the principal place of prayer, is more spacious than those on the three other sides of the court: it generally has two or more rows of columns, forming so many aisles, parallel with the exterior wall. In some cases this portico, like the other three, is open to the court: in other cases, it is separated from the court by partitions of wood, connecting the front row of columns. In the centre of its exterior wall is the mehráb (or niche) which marks the direction of Mekkeh; and to the right of this is the "mimbar" (or pulpit). Opposite the mehráb, in the fore part of the portico, or in its central part, there is generally a platform (called "dikkeh"), surrounded by a parapet, and supported by small columns; and by it, or before it, are one or two seats, having a kind of desk to bear a volume of the K̄ur-án, from which a chapter is read to the congregation. The walls are generally quite plain, being simply white-washed; but in some mosques the lower part of the wall of the place of prayer is lined with coloured marbles, and the other part ornamented with various devices executed in stucco, but mostly with texts of the K̄ur-án (which form long friezes, having a pleasing effect), and never with the representation of anything that has life. The pavement is covered with matting, and the rich and poor pray side by side; the man of rank or wealth enjoying no peculiar distinction or comfort, unless (which is sometimes the case) he have a prayer-carpet brought by his servant, and spread for him."*

The Prophet did not forbid *women* to attend public prayers in a mosque, but pronounced it better for them to pray in private: in Cairo, however, neither females nor young boys are allowed to pray with the congrega-

* Adjoining each mosque are several "latrinæ," in each of which is a receptacle with water for ablution.

tion in the mosque, or even to be present in the mosque at any time of prayer : formerly women were permitted (and perhaps are still in some countries), but were obliged to place themselves apart from the men, and behind the latter ; because, as Sale has remarked, the Muslims are of opinion that the presence of females inspires a different kind of devotion from that which is requisite in a place dedicated to the worship of God. Very few women in Egypt even pray at home.

Over each of the mosques of Cairo presides a "Názir" (or warden), who is the trustee of the funds which arise from lands, houses, &c. bequeathed to the mosque by the founder and others, and who appoints the religious ministers and the inferior servants. Two "Imáms" are employed to officiate in each of the larger mosques : one of them, called the "Khateeb," preaches and prays before the congregation on the Friday : the other is an "Imám Rátib," or ordinary Imám, who recites the five prayers of every day in the mosque, at the head of those persons who may be there at the exact times of those prayers : but in most of the smaller mosques both these offices are performed by one Imám. There are also to each mosque one or more "muéddins" (to chant the call to prayer), and "bowwábs" (or doorkeepers), according as there are one or more mád'neh's (or menarets) and entrances ; and several other servants are employed to sweep the mosque, spread the mats, light the lamps, and attend to the sákiyeh (or water-wheel), by which the tank or fountain, and other receptacles for water, necessary to the performance of ablutions, are supplied. The Imáms, and those persons who perform the lower offices, are all paid from the funds of the mosque, and not by any contributions exacted from the people.

The condition of the Imáms is very different, in most respects, from that of Christian priests. They have no authority above other persons, and do not enjoy any respect but what their reputed piety or learning may obtain them : nor are they a distinct order of men set apart for religious offices, like our clergy, and composing an indissoluble fraternity ; for a man who has acted as

the Imám of a mosque may be displaced by the warden of that mosque, and, with his employment and salary, loses the *title* of Imám, and has no better chance of being again chosen for a religious minister than any other person competent to perform the office. The Imáms obtain their livelihood chiefly by other means than the service of the mosque, as their salaries are very small: that of a Khaṭeeb being generally about a piaster ($2\frac{2}{3}d.$ of our money) per month: and that of an ordinary Imám, about five piasters. Some of them engage in trade; several of them are “aṭṭárs” (or druggists and perfumers), and many of them are schoolmasters: those who have no regular occupations of these kinds often recite the Kūr-án for hire in private houses. They are mostly chosen from among the poor students of the great mosque El-Azhar.

The large mosques are open from day-break till a little after the ‘eshē, or till nearly two hours after sunset. The others are closed between the hours of morning and noon prayers; and most mosques are also closed in rainy weather (excepting at the times of prayer), lest persons who have no shoes should enter, and dirt the pavement and matting. Such persons always enter by the door nearest the tank or fountain (if there be more than one door), that they may wash before they pass into the place of prayer; and generally this door alone is left open in dirty weather. The great mosque El-Azhar remains open all night, with the exception of the principal place of prayer, which is called the “maḡsoorah,” being partitioned off from the rest of the building. In many of the larger mosques, particularly in the afternoon, persons are seen lounging, chatting together, eating, sleeping, and sometimes spinning or sewing, or engaged in some other simple craft; but, notwithstanding such practices, which are contrary to precepts of their prophet, the Muslims very highly respect their mosques. There are several mosques in Cairo (as the Azhar, Hasaneyn, &c.) *before* which no Frank, nor any other Christian, nor a Jew, was allowed to pass, till of late years, since the French invasion.

On the Friday, half an hour before the “duhr” (or

noon), the muëddins of the mosques ascend to the galleries of the mād'nehs, and chant the "Selám," which is a salutation to the Prophet, not always expressed in the same words, but generally in words to the following effect:—"Blessing and peace be on thee, O thou of great dignity! O Apostle of God! Blessing and peace be on thee, to whom the Truth said, I am God! Blessing and peace be on thee, thou first of the creatures of God, and seal of the Apostles of God! From me be peace on thee, on thee and on thy Family and all thy Companions!" —Persons then begin to assemble in the mosques.

The utmost solemnity and decorum are observed in the public worship of the Muslims. Their looks and behaviour in the mosque are not those of enthusiastic devotion, but of calm and modest piety. Never are they guilty of a designedly irregular word or action during their prayers. The pride and fanaticism which they exhibit in common life, in intercourse with persons of their own or of a different faith, seem to be dropped on their entering the mosque, and they appear wholly absorbed in the adoration of their Creator; humble and downcast, yet without affected humility or a forced expression of countenance.

The Muslim takes off his shoes at the door of the mosque, carries them in his left hand, sole to sole, and puts his right foot first over the threshold. If he have not previously performed the preparatory ablution, he repairs at once to the tank or fountain to acquit himself of that duty. Before he commences his prayers, he places his shoes (and his sword and pistols, if he have such arms) upon the matting, a little before the spot where his head will touch the ground in prostration: his shoes are put one upon the other, sole to sole.

The people who assemble to perform the noon prayers of Friday arrange themselves in rows parallel to that side of the mosque in which is the niche, and facing that side. Many do not go until the adán of noon, or just before. When a person goes at, or a little after, the Selám, as soon as he has taken his place in one of the ranks, he performs two rek'ahs, and then remains sitting, on his knees, or cross-legged, while a reader, having

seated himself on the reading-chair immediately after the Selám, is occupied in reciting (usually without book) the Soorat el-Kahf (the 18th chapter of the Kur-an), or a part of it; for, generally, he has not finished it before the adán of noon, when he stops. All the congregation, as soon as they hear the adán (which is the same as on other days), sit on their knees and feet. When the adán is finished, they stand up, and perform, each separately, two* rek'ahs, "sunnet el-gum'ah" (or the sunneh ordinance for Friday), which they conclude, like the ordinary prayers, with the two salutations. A servant of the mosque, called a "Murakḵee," then opens the folding-doors at the foot of the pulpit-stairs, takes from behind them a straight wooden sword, and, standing a little to the right of the doorway, with his right side towards the kibleh, holds this sword in his right hand, resting the point on the ground. In this position he says, "Verily God favoureth, and his angels bless, the Prophet. O ye who believe, bless him and greet him with a salutation!"† Then, one or more persons, called "Muballighs," stationed on the dikkeh, chant the following, or similar words:‡—"O God! favour and preserve and bless the most noble of the Arabs and 'Agam [or foreigners], the Imám of Mekkeh and El-Medeeneh and the Temple, to whom the spider showed favour, and wove its web in the cave; and whom the ḍabbṣ saluted, and before whom the moon was cloven in twain, our lord Moḥammad, and his Family and Companions!" The Murakḵee then recites the adán (which the Muëddins have already chanted): after every few words he pauses, and the Muballighs, on the dikkeh, repeat the same words in a sonorous chant.¶ Before the adán is finished, the Khaṭeeb, or Imám, comes to the

* If of the sect of the Sháfe'ees, to which most of the people of Cairo belong; but if of that of the Hanafees, *four* rek'ahs.

† Kur-án, chap. xxxiii., v. 56.

‡ There are some trifling differences in the forms of salutations of the Prophet in the Friday-prayers in different mosques: I describe what is most common.

§ A kind of lizard, the *lacerta Libyca*.

¶ In the great mosque El-Azhar, there are several Muballighs in different places, to make the adán heard to the whole congregation.

foot of the pulpit, takes the wooden sword from the Murakkee's hand, ascends the pulpit, and sits on the top step or platform. The pulpit of a large mosque, on this day, is decorated with two flags, with the profession of the faith, or the names of God and Moḥammad, worked upon them: these are fixed at the top of the stairs, slanting forward. The Murakkee and Muballighs having finished the adán, the former repeats a tradition of the Prophet, saying, "The Prophet (upon whom be blessing and peace!) hath said, 'If thou say unto thy companion while the Imám is preaching on Friday, Be thou silent, thou speakest rashly.' Be ye silent: ye shall be rewarded: God shall recompense you." He then sits down. The Khaṭeeb now rises, and, holding the wooden sword* in the same manner as the Murakkee did, delivers an exhortation, called "khutbet el-waáz." As the reader may be curious to see a translation of a Muslim sermon, I insert one. The following is a sermon preached on the first Friday of the Arab year.† The original, as usual, is in rhyming prose.

"Praise be to God, the renewer of years, and the multiplier of favours, and the creator of months and days, according to the most perfect wisdom and most admirable regulation; who hath dignified the months of the Arabs above all other months, and pronounced that among the more excellent of them is El-Moḥarram the Sacred, and commenced with it the year, as He hath closed it with Zu-l-Heggeh. How propitious is the beginning, and how good is the end!‡ [I extol] his perfection, exempting

* To commemorate the acquisition of Egypt by the sword. It is never used by the Khaṭeeb but in a country or town that has been so acquired by the Muslims from unbelievers.

† During my first visit to Egypt, I went to the great mosque El-Azhar, to witness the performance of the Friday-prayers by the largest congregation in Cairo. I was pleased with the preaching of the Khaṭeeb of the mosque, Gád-El-Mowla, and afterwards procured his sermon-book ("deewán khutab"), containing sermons for every Friday in the year, and for the two "eeds," or grand festivals. I translate the first sermon.

‡ The year begins and ends with a sacred month. The sacred months are four; the first, seventh, eleventh and twelfth. During these, war was forbidden to be waged against such as acknowledged them to be sacred; but was afterwards allowed. The first month is also held to be excellent on account of the day of 'A'shoora; and the last, on account of the pilgrimage.

Him from the association of any other deity with Him. He hath well considered what He hath formed, and established what He hath contrived, and He alone hath the power to create and to annihilate. I praise Him, extolling his perfection, and exalting his name, for the knowledge and inspiration which He hath graciously vouchsafed; and I testify that there is no deity but God alone; He hath no companion; He is the most holy King; the [God of] peace: and I testify that our lord and our Prophet and our friend Moḥammad is his servant and his apostle and his elect and his friend, the guide of the way and the lamp of the dark. O God! favour and preserve and bless this noble Prophet, and chief and excellent apostle, the merciful-hearted, our lord Moḥammad, and his family, and his companions, and his wives, and his posterity, and the people of his house, the noble persons, and preserve them amply!—O servants of God! your lives have been gradually curtailed, and year after year hath passed away, and ye are sleeping on the bed of indolence and on the pillow of iniquity. Ye pass by the tombs of your predecessors, and fear not the assault of destiny and destruction, as if others departed from the world and ye must of necessity remain in it. Ye rejoice at the arrival of new years, as if they brought an increase to the term of life, and swim in the seas of desires, and enlarge your hopes, and in every way exceed other people [in presumption], and ye are sluggish in doing good. O how great a calamity is this! God teacheth by an allegory. Know ye not that in the curtailment of time by indolence and sleep there is very great trouble? Know ye not that in the cutting short of lives by the termination of years is a very great warning? Know ye not that the night and day divide the lives of numerous souls? Know ye not that health and capacity are two blessings coveted by many men? But the truth hath become manifest to him who hath eyes. Ye are now between two years: one year hath passed away, and come to an end, with its evils; and ye have entered upon another year, in which, if it please God, mankind shall

be relieved. Is any of you determining upon diligence [in doing good] in the year to come? or repenting of his failings in the times that are passed? The happy is he who maketh amends for the time passed in the time to come; and the miserable is he whose days pass away and he is careless of his time. This new year hath arrived, and the sacred month of God hath come with blessings to you,—the first of the months of the year, and of the four sacred months, as hath been said, and the most worthy of preference and honour and reverence. Its fast is the most excellent of fasts after that which is incumbent,* and the doing of good in it is among the most excellent of the objects of desire. Whosoever desireth to reap advantage from it, let him fast the ninth and tenth days, looking for aid.† Abstain not from this fast through indolence, and esteeming it a hardship; but comply with it in the best manner, and honour it with the best of honours, and improve your time by the worship of God morning and evening. Turn unto God with repentance, before the assault of death: He is the God who accepteth repentance of his servants, and pardoneth sins.—*The Tradition.*‡—The apostle of God (God favour and preserve him!) hath said, ‘The most excellent prayer, after the prescribed,§ is the prayer that is said in the last third of the night, and the most excellent fast, after Ramadán, is that of the month of God, El-Moharram.’”

The Khaṭeeb, having concluded his exhortation, says to the congregation, “Supplicate God.” He then sits down, and prays privately; and each member of the congregation at the same time offers up some private petition, as after the ordinary prayers, holding his hands before him (looking at the palms), and then drawing

* That of the month of Ramadán.

† See an account of the customs observed in honour of the day of ‘A’shoora, Chapter XXIV.

‡ The Khaṭeeb always closes his exhortation with one or two traditions of the Prophet.

§ The five daily prayers ordained by the K̄ur-án.

them down his face. This done, the Muballighs say, "A'meen! A'meen! (Amen! Amen!) O Lord of all creatures!"—The Khaṭēeb now rises again, and recites another Khuṭbeh, called, "khuṭbet en-naṭ," of which the following is a translation :*—

"Praise be to God, abundant praise, as He hath commanded! I testify that there is no deity but God alone: He hath no companion: affirming his supremacy, and condemning him who denieth and disbelieveth: and I testify that our lord and our prophet Moḥammad is his servant and his apostle, the lord of mankind, the intercessor, the accepted intercessor, on the day of assembling: God favour him and his family as long as the eye seeth and the ear heareth! O people! reverence God by doing what He hath commanded, and abstain from that which He hath forbidden and prohibited. The happy is he who obeyeth, and the miserable is he who opposeth and sinneth. Know that the present world is a transitory abode, and that the world to come is a lasting abode. Make provision, therefore, in your transitory state for your lasting state, and prepare for your reckoning and standing before your Lord: for know that ye shall to-morrow be placed before God, and reckoned with according to your deeds; and before the Lord of Might ye shall be present, 'and those who have acted unjustly shall know with what an overthrowal they shall be overthrown.'† Know that God, whose perfection I extol, and whose name be exalted, hath said (and ceaseth not to say wisely, and to command judiciously, warning you, and teaching, and honouring the dignity of your Prophet, extolling and magnifying him), Verily, God favoureth, and his angels bless, the Prophet: O ye who believe, bless him, and greet him with a salutation!‡ O God! favour Moḥammad and the family of Moḥammad, as Thou favouredst Ibráheem|| and the family of Ibráheem; and

* This is always the same, or nearly so.

† K̄ur-án, chap. xxvi., last verse. ‡ Idem., chap. xxxiii., ver. 56.

|| The patriarch Abraham.

bless Moḥammad and the family of Moḥammad, as 'Thou blessedst Ibráheem and the family of Ibráheem among all creatures—for 'Thou art praiseworthy and glorious! O God! do 'Thou also be well pleased with the four Khaalēfeh's, the orthodox lords, of high dignity and illustrious honour, Aboo-Bekr Eṣ-Ṣiddeek, and 'Omar, and 'Osmán, and 'Alee; and be 'Thou well pleased, O God! with the six who remained of the ten noble and just persons who swore allegiance to thy Prophet Moḥammad (God favour and preserve him!) under the tree; (for 'Thou art the Lord of piety and the Lord of pardon,) those persons of excellence and clemency, and rectitude and prosperity, Talḥah, and Ez-Zubeyr, and Saad, and Sa'eed, and 'Abd-Er-Raḥmán Ibn-'Owf, and Aboo-'Obeydeh 'A'mir Ibn-El-Garráḥ; and with all the Companions of the Apostle of God! (God favour and preserve him!); and be 'Thou well pleased, O God! with the two martyred descendants, the two bright moons, 'the two lords of the youths of the people of Paradise in Paradise,' the two sweet-smelling flowers of the Prophet of this nation, Aboo-Moḥammad El-Ḥasan, and Aboo-'Abd-Allah El-Ḥoseyn: and be 'Thou well pleased, O God! with their mother, the daughter of the Apostle of God (God favour and preserve him!), Fátimēh Ez-Zahra, and with their grandmother Khadeegēh El-Kubra, and with 'A'ishēh, the mother of the faithful, and with the rest of the pure wives, and with the generation which succeeded, the Companions, and the generation which succeeded that, with beneficence to the day of judgment! O God! pardon the believing men and the believing women, and the Muslim men and the Muslim women, those who are living and the dead; for thou art a hearer near, an answerer of prayers, O Lord of all creatures! O God! aid El-Islám, and strengthen its pillars, and make infidelity to tremble, and destroy its might, by the preservation of thy servant, and the son of thy servant, the submissive to the might of thy majesty and glory, whom God hath aided, by the care of the Adored King, our master the Sultán, son of the Sultán, the Sultán Maḥ-

mood* Khán: may God assist him, and prolong [his reign]! O God! assist him, and assist his armies! O thou Lord of the religion, and of the world present, and the world to come! O Lord of all creatures! O God! assist the forces of the Muslims, and the armies of the Unitarians! O God! frustrate the infidels and polytheists, thine enemies, the enemies of the religion! O God! invert their banners, and ruin their habitations, and give them and their wealth as booty to the Muslims!† O God! unloose the captivity of the captives, and annul the debts of the debtors; and make this town to be safe and secure, and blessed with wealth and plenty, and all the towns of the Muslims. O Lord of all creatures! And decree safety and health to us and to all travellers, and pilgrims, and warriors, and wanderers, upon thy earth, and upon thy sea, such as are Muslims, O Lord of all creatures! ‘O Lord! we have acted unjustly towards our own souls, and if Thou do not forgive us and be merciful unto us, we shall surely be of those who perish.’‡ I beg of God, the Great, that He may forgive me and you, and all the people of Moḥammad, the servants of God. ‘Verily God commandeth justice, and the doing of good, and giving [what is due] to kindred; and forbiddeth wickedness, and iniquity, and oppression: He admonisheth you that ye may reflect.’§ Remember God; He will remember you: and thank him; He will increase to you [your blessings]. Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures!”

During the rise of the Nile, a good inundation is also prayed for in this Khuṭbeh. The Khaṭeeb, or Imám, having ended it, descends from the pulpit, and the Mu-ballighs chant the “ikámeh” (described in note, p. 111): the Imám, stationed before the niche, then recites the “fard” prayers of Friday, which consist of two rek’ahs, and are similar to the ordinary prayers. The people do

* The reigning Sultán at the time when the above was written.

† This sentence, beginning “O God, frustrate,” was not inserted in one copy of this prayer, which I obtained from an Imám. Another Imám, at whose dictation I wrote the copy here translated, told me that this sentence and some others were often omitted.

‡ Kur-án, chap. vii., v. 22.

§ Ibid., chap. xvi., v. 92.

the same, but silently, and keeping time exactly with the Imám in the various postures. Those who are of the Málikée sect then leave the mosque; and so also do many persons of the other sects: but some of the Sháfi'ees and Hanafées (there are scarcely any Hambel'ees in Cairo) remain, and recite the *ordinary* fard prayers of noon; forming a number of separate groups, in each of which one acts as Imám. The rich on going out of the mosque, often give alms to the poor outside the door.

There are other prayers to be performed on particular occasions—on the two grand annual festivals, on the nights of Ramadán (the month of abstinence), on the occasion of an eclipse of the sun or moon, for rain, previously to the commencement of battle, in pilgrimage, and at funerals.

I have spoken thus fully of Muslim worship because my countrymen in general have very imperfect and erroneous notions on this subject; many of them even imagining that the Muslims ordinarily pray to their *Prophet* as well as to God. Invocations to the Prophet for his *intercession*, are, indeed, frequently made, particularly at his tomb, where pious visitors generally say, “We ask thy intercession, O Apostle of God!” The Muslims also even implore the intercession of their numerous saints.

The duty next in importance to prayer is that of giving *alms*. Certain alms are prescribed by law, and are called “zekah:” others, called “*ṣadaqah*,” are voluntary. The former, or obligatory alms, were, in the earlier ages of El-Islám, collected by officers appointed by the sovereign, for pious uses, such as building mosques, &c.; but now it is left to the Muslim's conscience to give them, and to apply them in what manner he thinks fit; that is, to bestow them upon whatever needy persons he may choose. They are to be given once in every year, of cattle and sheep, generally in the proportion of one in forty, two in a hundred and twenty; of camels, for every five, a ewe; or for twenty-five, a pregnant camel; and likewise of money, and, among the

Hanafees, of merchandize, &c. He who has money to the amount of two hundred dirhems (or drams) of silver, or twenty mitkáls (*i. e.* thirty drams) of gold (or, among the Hanafees, the value of the above in gold or silver ornaments, utensils, &c.), must annually give the fortieth part ("ruba el-'oshr"), or the value of that part.

Fasting is the next duty. The Muslim is commanded to fast during the whole month of Ramadán* every day, from the first appearance of day-break, or rather from the hour when there is sufficient light for a person to distinguish plainly a white thread from a black thread † (about two hours before sun-rise in Egypt), until sunset. He must abstain from eating, drinking, smoking, smelling perfumes, and every unnecessary indulgence or pleasure of a worldly nature; even from intentionally swallowing his spittle. When Ramadán falls in summer, ‡ the fast is very severe; the abstinence from drinking being most painfully felt. Persons who are sick, or on a journey, and soldiers in time of war, are not obliged to observe the fast during Ramadán; but if they do not keep it in this month they should fast an equal number of days at a future time. Fasting is also to be dispensed with in the cases of a nurse and a pregnant woman. The Prophet even disapproved of any person's keeping the fast of Ramadán if not perfectly able; and desired no man to fast so much as to injure his health, or disqualify himself for necessary labour. The modern Muslims seem to regard the fast of Ramadán as of more importance than any other religious act, for many of them keep this fast who neglect their daily prayers; and even those who break the fast, with very few exceptions, pretend to keep it. Many Muslims of the wealthy classes eat and drink in secret during Ramadán; but the greater number strictly keep the fast, which is fatal to numerous persons in a weak state of health. There are some other days on which it is considered meritorious to fast, but not absolutely

* Because the Prophet received the first revelation in that month.

† Kur-án, chap. ii., v. 183.

The year being lunar, each month retrogrades through all the seasons in the course of about thirty-three years and a half.

necessary. On the two grand festivals, namely, that following Ramadán, and that which succeeds the pilgrimage, it is *unlawful* to do so, being expressly forbidden by the Prophet.

The last of the four most important duties, that of *pilgrimage*, remains to be noticed. It is incumbent on every Muslim to perform, once in his life, the pilgrimage to Mekkeh and Mount 'Arafát, unless poverty or ill health prevent him; or, if a Hanafee, he may send a deputy, whose expenses he must pay.* Many, however, neglect the duty of pilgrimage who cannot plead a lawful excuse; and they are not reproached for so doing. It is not merely by the visit to Mekkeh, and the performance of the ceremonies of compassing the Kaabeh seven times and kissing the "black stone" in each round, and other rites in the Holy City, that the Muslim acquires the title of "el-hágg"† (or the pilgrim): the final object of the pilgrimage is Mount 'Arafát, six hours' journey distant from Mekkeh. During his performance of the required ceremonies in Mekkeh, and also during his journey to 'Arafát, and until his completion of the pilgrimage, the Muslim wears a peculiar dress, called "ehrá́m" (vulgarly herám), generally consisting of two simple pieces of cotton, or linen, or woollen cloth, without seam or ornament, one of which is wrapped round the loins, and the other thrown over the shoulders: the instep and heel of each foot, and the head, must be bare; but umbrellas are now used by many of the pilgrims. It is necessary that the pilgrim be present on the occasion of a Khuṭbeh which is recited on Mount 'Arafát in the afternoon of the 9th of the month of Zu-l-Heggeh. In the ensuing evening after sunset, the pilgrims commence their return to Mekkeh. Halting the following day in the valley of Mina (or, as it is more commonly called, Muna), they complete the ceremonies of the pilgrimage by a sacrifice (of one or more male

* A Málikee is held bound to perform the pilgrimage if strong enough to bear the journey on foot, and able to earn his food on the way.

† On the pronunciation of this word, see a note to the second paragraph of Chapter V.

sheep, he-goats, cows, or she-camels, part of the flesh of which they eat, and part give to the poor), and by shaving the head and clipping the nails. Every one, after this, resumes his usual dress, or puts on a new one, if provided with such. The sacrifice is called "el-fida" (or the ransom), as it is performed in commemoration of the ransom of Isma'eel (or Ishmael) by the sacrifice of the ram, when he was himself about to have been offered up by his father; for it is the general opinion of the Muslims that it was this son, not Isaac, who was to have been sacrificed by his father.

There are other ordinances, more or less connected with those which have been already explained.

The two festivals called "el-'Eed eş-Sugheiyir,"* or the Minor Festival, and "el-'Eed el-Kebeer," or the Great Festival, the occasions of which have been mentioned above, are observed with public prayer and general rejoicing. The first of these lasts three days; and the second, three or four days. The festivities with which they are celebrated will be described in a subsequent chapter. On the first day of the latter festival (it being the day on which the pilgrims perform their sacrifice) every Muslim should slay a victim, if he can afford to purchase one. The wealthy person slays several sheep, or a sheep or two, and a buffalo, and distributes the greater portion of the meat to the poor. The slaughter may be performed by a deputy.

War against enemies of El-Islám, who have been the first aggressors, is enjoined as a sacred duty; and he who loses his life in fulfilling this duty, if unpaid, is promised the rewards of a martyr. It has been said, even by some of their leading doctors, that the Muslims are commanded to put to death all idolators who refuse to embrace El-Islám, excepting women and children, whom they are to make slaves:† but the precepts on which

* More properly "Şagheer." This is what many travellers have incorrectly called "the Great Festival."

† Misled by the decision of those doctors, and an opinion prevalent in Europe, I represented the laws of "holy war" as more severe than I find them to be according to the letter and spirit of the Kur-án, when

this assertion is founded relate to the pagan Arabs, who had violated their oaths and long persevered in their hostility to Moḥammad and his followers. According to the decisions of the most reasonable doctors, the laws respecting other idolators, as well as Christians and Jews, who have drawn upon themselves the hostility of the Muslims, are different: of such enemies, if reduced by force of arms, refusing to capitulate or to surrender themselves, the men may be put to death or be made slaves, and the women and children also, under the same circumstances, may be made slaves: but life and liberty are to be granted to those enemies who surrender themselves by capitulation or otherwise, on the condition of their embracing El-Islām or paying a poll-tax, unless they have acted perfidiously towards the Muslims, as did the Jewish tribe of Kureydhah, who, being in league with Moḥammad, went over to his enemies and aided them against him: for which conduct, when they surrendered, the men were slain, and the women and children were made slaves.—The Muslims, it may here be added, are forbidden to contract intimate friendship with unbelievers.

There are certain prohibitory laws in the Kur-ān which must be mentioned here, as remarkably affecting the moral and social condition of its disciples.

Wine, and all inebriating liquors, are forbidden, as being the cause of “more evil than profit.”* Many of the Muslims, however, in the present day, drink wine, brandy, &c., in secret; and some, thinking it no sin to indulge thus in moderation, scruple not to do so openly; but among the Egyptians there are few who transgress

carefully examined, and according to the Hanafee code. I am indebted to Mr. Urquhart for suggesting to me the necessity of revising my former statement on this subject; and must express my conviction that no precept is to be found in the Kur-ān which, taken with the context, can justify unprovoked war.

* Kur-ān, chap. ii., v. 216. A kind of wine, formerly called “nebeedh” (a name now given to prohibited kinds), may be lawfully drunk. This is generally an infusion of dry grapes or dry dates. The Muslims used to keep it until it had slightly fermented; and the Prophet himself was accustomed to drink it, but not when it was more than two days old. The nebeedh of raisins is now called “zebeeb.”

in this flagrant manner. "Boozeh," or "boozah," which is an intoxicating liquor made with barley-bread, crumbled, mixed with water, strained, and left to ferment, is commonly drunk by the boatmen of the Nile, and by other persons of the lower orders.* Opium, and other drugs which produce a similar effect, are considered unlawful, though not mentioned in the *Kur-án*; and persons who are addicted to the use of these drugs are regarded as immoral characters; but in Egypt such persons are not very numerous. Some Muslims have pronounced tobacco, and even coffee, unlawful.

The eating of swine's flesh is strictly forbidden. The unwholesome effects of that meat in a hot climate would be a sufficient reason for the prohibition; but the pig is held in abhorrence by the Muslim chiefly on account of its extremely filthy habits.† Most animals prohibited for food by the Mosaic law are alike forbidden to the Muslim. The camel is an exception. The Muslim is "forbidden [to eat] that which dieth of itself, and blood, and swine's flesh, and that on which the name of any beside God hath been invoked; and that which hath been strangled, or killed by a blow, or by a fall, or by the horns [of another beast]; and that which hath been [partly] eaten by a wild beast, except what he shall [himself] kill; and that which hath been sacrificed unto idols."‡ An animal that is killed for the food of man must be slaughtered in a particular manner: the person who is about to perform the operation must say, "In the name of God! God is most great!" and then cut its throat, at the part next the head, taking care to divide the windpipe, gullet, and carotid arteries: unless it be a camel, in which case he should *stab* the throat at the part next the breast. It is forbidden to utter, in slaughtering an animal, the phrase which is so often made use of on

* A similar beverage, thus prepared from barley, was used by the ancient Egyptians. (Herodotus, lib. ii. cap. 77.) The modern inhabitants of Egypt also prepare boozeh from wheat and from millet in the same manner, but less commonly.

† Swine were universally deemed impure by the ancient Egyptians. (Herodotus, lib. ii. cap. 47.)

‡ *Kur-án*, chap. v., v. 4.

other occasions, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful!" because the mention of the most benevolent epithets of the Deity on such an occasion would seem like a mockery of the sufferings which it is about to endure. Some persons in Egypt, but mostly women, when about to kill an animal for food, say, "In the name of God; God is most great! God give thee patience to endure the affliction which he hath allotted thee!"* If the sentiment which first dictated this prayer were always felt, it would present a beautiful trait in the character of the people who use it. In cases of necessity, when in danger of starving, the Muslim is allowed to eat any food which is unlawful under other circumstances. The mode of slaughter above described is, of course, only required to be practised in the cases of domestic animals. Most kinds of fish are lawful food:† so also are many birds; the tame kinds of which must be killed in the same manner as cattle; but the wild may be shot. The hare, rabbit, gazelle, &c., are lawful food, and may either be shot, or killed by a dog, provided the name of God was uttered at the time of discharging the arrow, &c., or slipping the dog, and he (the dog) has not eaten any part of the prey. This animal, however, is considered very unclean; the Sháfe'ees hold themselves to be polluted by the touch of its nose, if it be wet; and if any part of their clothes be so touched, they must wash that part with seven waters, and once with clean earth: some others are only careful not to let the animal lick, or defile in a worse manner, their persons or their dress, &c. When game has been struck down by any weapon, but not killed, its throat must be immediately cut: otherwise it is unlawful food.

Gambling and usury are prohibited,‡ and all games of

* The Arabic words of this prayer, "God give thee patience," &c. are, "Allah yeshabbirak (for yusabbirak) 'ala mā belāk."

† In some respects the Muslim code does not appear to be so strictly founded upon exigencies of a sanitary nature as the Mosaic. See Leviticus, xi. 9—12. In Egypt, fish which have not scales are generally found to be unwholesome food. One of the few reasonable laws of El-Hákím was that which forbade the selling or catching such kinds of fish. See De Sacy, 'Chrestomathie Arabe,' 2nde ed., tome i. p. 98.

‡ It is unlawful to give or receive interest, however small, for a loan,

chance; and likewise the making of images or pictures of anything that has life.* The Prophet declared that every representation of this kind would be placed before its author on the day of judgment, and that he would be commanded to put life into it; which not being able to do, he would be cast, for a time, into hell.

The principal *civil* and *criminal laws* remain to be stated. Their origin we discover partly in customs of the Pagan Arabs; but mostly in the Jewish Scriptures and traditions.

The civil and criminal laws are chiefly and immediately derived from the *Kur-án*;† but, in many important cases, this highest authority affords no precept. In most of these cases the Traditions of the Prophet direct the decisions of the judge.‡ There are, however, some important cases, and many of an inferior kind, respecting which both the *Kur-án* and the Traditions are silent or undecisive. These are determined by the explanations and amplifications derived either from the concordance of the principal early disciples, or from analogy, by the four great Imáms, or founders of the four orthodox sects of *El-Islám*; generally on the authority of the Imám of that sect to which the ruling power belongs, which sect, in Egypt, and throughout the Turkish Empire, is that of the Hanafees: or, if none of the decisions of the Imám relate to a case in dispute (which not unfrequently happens), judgment is given in accordance with a sentence of some other eminent doctor, founded upon analogy.—In general, only the principal laws, as laid down in the *Kur-án* and the Traditions, will be here stated.

The laws relating to *marriage* and the licence of *polygamy*, the facility of *divorce* allowed by the *Kur-án*, and

or on account of credit; and to exchange any article for another article of the same species, but differing in quantity. These and several other commercial transactions of a similar kind are severely condemned; but they are not very uncommon among modern Muslims, some of whom take exorbitant interest.

* Many of the Muslims hold that only sculptures which cast a shadow, representing living creatures, are unlawful; but the Prophet certainly condemned pictures also.

† A law given in the *Kur-án* is called "*fard*."

‡ A law derived from the Traditions is called "*sunneh*."

the permission of *concubinage*, are essentially the natural and necessary consequences of the main principle of the constitution of Muslim society—the restriction of the intercourse between the sexes before marriage. Few men would marry if he who was disappointed in a wife whom he had never seen before were not allowed to take another; and in the case of a man's doing this, his own happiness, or that of the former wife, or the happiness of both these parties, may require his either retaining this wife or divorcing her. But I hope that my reader will admit a much stronger reason for these laws, regarding them as designed for the *Muslims*. As the Mosaic code allowed God's chosen people, for the hardness of their hearts, to put away their wives, and forbade neither polygamy nor concubinage, he who believes that Moses was divinely inspired, to enact the best laws for his people, must hold the permission of these practices to be less injurious to morality than their prohibition, among a people similar to the ancient Jews. Their permission, though certainly productive of injurious effects upon morality and domestic happiness, prevents a profligacy that would be worse than that which prevails to so great a degree in European countries, where parties are united in marriage after an intimate mutual acquaintance. As to the licence of polygamy, which seems to be unfavourable to the accomplishment of the main object for which marriage was instituted, as well as to the exercise and improvement of the nobler powers of the mind, we should remark, that it was not introduced, but limited, by the legislator of the Muslims. It is true that he assumed to himself the privilege of having a greater number of wives than he allowed to others; but in doing so, he may have been actuated by the want of male offspring, rather than impelled by voluptuousness.

The law respecting marriage and concubinage is perfectly explicit as to the number of wives whom a Muslim may have at the same time; but it is not so with regard to the number of concubine-slaves whom he may have. It is written, "Take in marriage, of the women who please you, two, three, or four; but if ye fear that ye

cannot act equitably [to so many, take] one ; or, [take] those whom your right hands have acquired,"* that is, your slaves. Therefore many of the wealthy Muslims marry two, three, or four wives, and keep besides several concubine-slaves ; and many of the most revered characters, even Companions of the Prophet, are recorded to have done the same. The conduct of the latter clearly shows that the number of concubine-slaves whom a man may have is not limited by the law in the opinion of the orthodox.†

It is held lawful for a Muslim to marry a Christian or a Jewish woman, if induced to do so by excessive love of her, or if he cannot obtain a wife of his own faith ; but in this case the offspring must follow the father's faith,‡ and the wife does not inherit when the father dies. A Muslim'eh, however, is not allowed under any circumstances, but when force is employed, to marry a man who is not of her own faith. A man is forbidden, by the *Kur-án* § and the *Sunneh*, to marry his mother, or other ascendant ; his daughter, or other descendant ; his sister, or half-sister ; the sister of his father or mother, or other ascendant ; his niece, or any of her descendants ; his foster-mother,|| or a woman related to him by milk in any of the degrees which would preclude his marriage with her if she were similarly related to him by consanguinity ; the mother of his wife, even if he have not consummated his marriage with this wife ; the daughter of his wife, if he have consummated his marriage with

* *Kur-án*, chap. iv., v. 3.

† Some Muslim moralists argue, that, as four wives are a sufficient number for one man, so also are four concubine-slaves, or four women consisting of these two classes together ; but notwithstanding what Sale and some other learned men have asserted on this subject, the Muslim law certainly does not limit the number of concubine-slaves whom a man may have, whether in addition to, or without, a wife or wives.

‡ In like manner, when a Christian man marries a Jewess, the Muslim law requires the offspring to profess "the better faith," namely, the Christian, if unwilling to embrace *El-Islám*.

§ Chap. iv., vv. 26 and 27.

|| By the *Hanafee* code, a man may not marry a woman from whose breast he has received a single drop of milk ; but *Esh-Sháfe'ee* does not prohibit the marriage unless he has been suckled by her five times in the course of the first two years.

the latter, and she be still his wife ; his father's wife, and his son's wife ; and to have at the same time two wives who are sisters, or aunt and niece : he is forbidden also to marry his unemancipated slave, or another man's slave, if he have already a free wife. It is lawful for the Muslim to see the faces of those women whom he is forbidden to marry, but of no others, excepting his own wives and female slaves. The marriage of a man and woman, or of a man and a girl who has arrived at puberty, is lawfully effected by their declaring (which the latter generally does by a "wekeel," or deputy) their consent to marry each other, in the presence of two witnesses (if witnesses can be procured), and by the payment, or part-payment, of a dowry. But the consent of a girl under the age of puberty is not required ; her father, or if he be dead, her nearest adult male relation, or any person appointed as her guardian by will or by the Kádee, acting for her as he pleases.* The giving of a dowry is indispensable, and the least sum that is allowed by law is ten "dirhems" (or drams of silver), which is equal to about five shillings of our money. A man may legally marry a woman without mentioning a dowry ; but after the consummation of the marriage she can, in this case, compel him to pay the sum of ten dirhems.†

A man may divorce his wife twice, and each time take her back without any ceremony, excepting in a case to be mentioned below ; but if he divorce her the third time, or put her away by a triple divorce conveyed in one sentence, he cannot receive her again until she has been married and divorced by another husband, who must have consummated his marriage with her.‡ When a man divorces his wife (which he does by merely saying, "Thou art divorced," or "I divorce thee"), he pays her a portion of her dowry (generally one-

* A boy may be thus married ; but he may divorce his wife.

† Whatever property the wife receives from her husband, parents, or any other person, is entirely at her own disposal, and not subject to any claim of her husband or his creditors.

‡ Kúr-án, chap. ii., vv. 229, 230.

third), which he had kept back from the first, to be paid on this occasion, or at his death; and she takes away with her the furniture, &c. which she brought at her marriage. He may thus put her away from mere dislike,* and without assigning any reason; but a woman cannot separate herself from her husband against his will, unless it be for some considerable fault on his part, as cruel treatment or neglect; and even then, application to the Kádee's court is generally necessary to compel the man to divorce her; and she forfeits the above-mentioned remnant of the dowry.

The first and second divorce, if made without any mutual agreement for a compensation from the woman, or a pecuniary sacrifice on her part, is termed "*ṭalāk reg'ee*" (a divorce which admits of return); because the husband may take back his wife, without her consent, during the period of her "*'eddeh*" (which will be presently explained), but not after, unless with her consent, and by a new contract. If he divorce her the first or second time for a compensation, she perhaps requesting, "Divorce me for what thou owest me," or "*— hast of mine*" (that is, of the dowry, furniture, &c.), or for an additional sum, he cannot take her again but by her own consent, and by a new contract. This is a "*ṭalāk báin*" (or separating divorce), and is termed "*the lesser separation*," to distinguish it from the third divorce, which is called "*the greater separation*." The "*'eddeh*" is the period during which a divorced woman, or a widow, must wait before marrying again,—in either case, if pregnant, until delivery: otherwise, the former must wait three lunar periods, or three months; and the latter four months and ten days. A woman who is divorced when in a state of pregnancy, though she may make a new contract of marriage immediately after her delivery, must wait forty days longer before she can complete her marriage by receiving her husband. The man who divorces his wife must maintain her in his own house, or in that of her parents, or

* As the Mosaic law also allows. See Deut. xxiv. 1. "

elsewhere, during the 'period of her 'eddeh; but must cease to live with her as her husband from the commencement of that period. A divorced woman who has a son under two years of age may retain him until he has attained that age, and may be compelled to do so by the law of the Sháfe'ees; and by the law of the Málíkees, until he has arrived at puberty; but the Hanafee law limits the period during which the boy should remain under her care to seven years: her daughter she should retain until nine years of age, or the period of puberty. If a man divorce his wife before the consummation of marriage, he must pay her half the sum which he has promised to give her as a dowry; or, if he have promised no dowry, he must pay her the half of the smallest dowry allowed by law, which has been mentioned above; and she may marry again immediately.

When a wife refuses to obey the lawful commands of her husband, he may, and generally does take her, or two witnesses* against her, to the Kádee's court, to prefer a complaint against her; and, if the case be proved, a certificate is written declaring the woman "náshizeh," or rebellious against her husband. This process is termed "writing a woman náshizeh." It exempts her husband from obligation to lodge, clothe, and maintain her. He is not obliged to divorce her; and by refusing to do this, he may prevent her marrying another man as long as he lives; but if she promise to be obedient afterwards, he must take her back, and maintain her, or divorce her. It is more common, however, for a wife whose husband refuses to divorce her, if she have parents or other relations able and willing to support her comfortably, to make a complaint at the Kádee's court, stating her husband's conduct to be of such a nature towards her that she will not live with him, and thus cause herself to be registered "náshizeh," and separated from him. In this case, the husband generally persists, from mere spite, in refusing to divorce her.

As concubines are *slaves*, some account of slaves in

* The witnesses must always be Muslims in accusations against a person of the same faith.

general may here be appropriately inserted, with a statement of the principal laws respecting concubines and their offspring, &c. The slave is either a person taken captive in war, or carried off by force from a foreign hostile country, and being at the time of capture an infidel; or the offspring of a female slave by another slave, or by any man who is not her owner, or by her owner if he do not acknowledge himself to be the father; but a person cannot be the slave of a relation who is within the prohibited degrees of marriage. The power of the owner is such that he may even kill his slave with impunity for any offence; and he incurs but a slight punishment (as imprisonment for a period at the discretion of the judge) if he do so wantonly. He may give or sell his slaves, excepting in some cases which will be mentioned; and may marry them to whom he will, but not separate them when married. A slave, however, according to most of the doctors, cannot have more than two wives at the same time. As a slave enjoys less advantages than a free person, the law, in some cases, ordains that his punishment for an offence shall be half of that to which the free is liable for the same offence, or even less than half: if it be a fine, or pecuniary compensation, it must be paid by the owner, to the amount, if necessary, of the value of the slave, or the slave must be given in compensation. An unemancipated slave, at the death of the owner, becomes the property of the heirs of the latter; and when an emancipated slave dies, leaving no male descendant or collateral relation, the former owner is the heir; or, if he be dead, his heirs inherit the slave's property. But an unemancipated slave can acquire no property without the permission of the owner. Complete and immediate emancipation is sometimes granted to a slave gratuitously, or for a future pecuniary compensation. It is conferred by means of a written document, or by a verbal declaration in the presence of two witnesses, or by presenting the slave with the certificate of sale obtained from the former owner. Future emancipation is some-

times covenanted to be granted on the fulfilment of certain conditions ; and more frequently, to be conferred on the occasion of the owner's death. In the latter case, the owner cannot sell the slave to whom he has made this promise ; and as he cannot alienate by will more than one-third of the whole property that he leaves, the law ordains that, if the value of the said slave exceed that portion, the slave must obtain, and pay to the owner's heirs, the additional sum. A Muslim may take as his concubine any of his female slaves who is a Muslim'eh, or a Christian, or a Jewess, if he have not married her to another man ; but he may not have as his concubines, at the same time, two or more who are sisters, or who are related to each other in any of the degrees which would prevent their both being his wives at the same time if they were free. A Christian is not by the law allowed, nor is a Jew, to have a Muslim'eh slave as his concubine.* The master must wait a certain period (generally from a month to three months) after his acquisition of a female slave, before he can take her as his concubine. When a female slave becomes a mother by her master, the child which she bears to him is free, if he acknowledge it to be his own ; but if not, it is his slave. In the former case the mother cannot afterwards be sold nor given away by her master (though she must continue to serve him and be his concubine as long as he desires) ; and she is entitled to emancipation at his death. Her bearing a child to him is called the cause of her emancipation or liberty ; but it does not oblige him to emancipate her as long as he lives, though it is commendable if he do so, and make her his wife, provided he have not already four wives, or if he marry her to another man, should it be her wish. A free person cannot become the husband or wife of his, or her, own slave, without first emancipating that slave ; and the marriage of a free person with the slave of

* Yet many Christians and Jews in Egypt infringe the law in this respect with impunity.

another is dissolved if the former become the owner of the latter, and cannot be renewed but by emancipation and a regular legal contract.

The most remarkable general principles of the laws of *inheritance* are the denial of any privileges to primogeniture,* and in most cases awarding to a female a share equal to half that of a male of the same degree of relationship to the deceased.† A person may bequeath one-third of his or her property; but not a larger portion, unless he or she has no legal heir; nor any portion to a legal heir, excepting wife or husband, without the consent of all the other heirs. The children of a person deceased inherit the whole of that person's property, or what remains after payment of the legacies and debts, &c., and the share of a male is double the share of a female. If the children of the deceased be only females, two or more in number, they inherit together, by the law of the *Kur-án*, two-thirds; and if there be but one child, and that a female, she inherits by the same law half. [But the remaining third, or half, is also assigned to the said daughters or daughter, by a law of the *Sunneh* (which applies also to other cases), if there be no other legal heir.] If the deceased have left no immediate descendant, the sons and daughters of his son or sons inherit as immediate descendants, [and so on.] If the deceased have left a child or a son's child [and so on], each of the parents of the deceased inherits one-sixth. If the father be dead, his share falls to *his* father. [If the mother be dead, her share falls to *her* mother.] If the deceased have left no child or son's child [and so on],

* In this the Muslim law differs from the Mosaic, which assigns a double portion to the first-born son. See Deut. xxi. 17.

† In my summary of the principal laws relating to inheritance, in the former editions of this work, there were some errors, occasioned by my relying too much upon Sale's version of the *Kur-án*; for I doubted not his accuracy, as he had several commentaries to consult, and I had none; wherefore, in my inquiries respecting these laws, I sought only to add to, not to correct, the information conveyed by his version. I have here given a corrected statement, derived from the *Kur-án* and the Commentary of the *Geláley*n, supplying some words of necessary explanation (which are enclosed in brackets) partly on the authority of a sheykh who was my tutor, and partly from the valuable work of D'Ohsson, 'Tab'leau Général de l'Empire Othoman,' Code Civil, livre, iv.

the mother has one-third of the property, or of what remains after deducting the share of the wife or wives or husband, and the residue is for the father; unless the deceased has left two or more brothers or sisters, in which case the mother inherits one-sixth, and the father the residue; the said brothers or sisters receiving nothing;* [if the deceased have left a father or any ascendant in the male line.] A man inherits half of what remains of his wife's property after the payment of her legacies, &c., if she have left no child or son's child, [and so on;] and one-fourth if she have left a child or son's child, [and so on.] One-fourth is the share of the wife, or of the wives conjointly, if the deceased husband have left no child or son's child, [and so on;] and one-eighth if he have left any such descendant.† If the deceased have not left a father, [nor any ascendant in the male line,] nor a child, [nor a son's child, and so on,] the law ordains as follows:—1. A sole brother, or sister, only by the mother's side, inherits one-sixth; and if there be two or more brothers or sisters, only by the mother's side, or one or more of such relations of each sex, they inherit collectively one-third, which is equally divided, without distinction of male and female.—2. If the deceased have left a sole sister by his father and mother, [and no such brother,] she inherits half; and a man inherits the whole property of such a sister, [or what remains after the pay-

* According to Sale's translation of the 12th verse of chap. iv., and a note thereon, if the deceased have no child, and his parents be his heirs, then his mother shall have the third part, and his father the other two-thirds: but if he have brethren, his mother shall have a sixth part;—and by his translation of the last verse of the same chapter, stating that the brothers of a man who has died *without issue* have a claim to inheritance, it is implied that the brothers, *if the father be living*, must have a share; consequently, that they would have, in the case above mentioned, a sixth part; for he has not stated that this portion which is deducted from the mother's share goes to the father, nor that the father's share is diminished.—Why the mother's share is diminished and the father's increased, in the case to which this note relates, I do not see: the reason might be easily inferred, were it not that the surviving brothers or sisters of the deceased may be his brothers or sisters by the mother's side only.

† This is exclusive of what may remain due to her of her dowry, of which one-third is usually held in reserve by the husband, to be paid to her if he divorce her, or when he dies.

ment of her legacies, &c.,] if she have left no child ; but if she have left a male child, [or son's child, and so on,] he (the brother) inherits nothing ; and if she have left a female child, the said brother inherits what remains after deducting that child's share, [and after the payment of the legacies, &c.] If the deceased have left two or more sisters by his father and mother, [and no such brother,] they inherit together two-thirds. If the deceased have left one or more brothers, and one or more sisters, by his father and mother, they inherit the whole [or what remains after the payment of the legacies, &c.], and the share of a male is double the share of a female.—3. Brothers and sisters by the father's side only, [when there is no brother or sister by the father and mother,] inherit as brothers and sisters by the father and mother.* No distinction is made between the child of a wife and that borne by a slave to her master (if the master acknowledge the child to be his own) : both inherit equally. So also do the child of a wife and the adopted child. A bastard inherits only from his mother, and *vice versâ*. When there is no legal heir, or legatee, the property falls to the government treasury, which is called "beyt el-mâl." The laws respecting certain remote degrees of kindred, &c., I have not thought it necessary to state.† The property of the deceased is nominally divided into *ķeeráts* (or twenty-fourth parts) ; and the share of each son, or other heir, is said to be so many *ķeeráts*.

The law is remarkably lenient towards *debtors*. "If there be any [debtor]," says the *Kur-án*,‡ "under a difficulty [of paying his debt], let [his creditor] wait till it be easy [for him to do it] ; but if ye remit it as alms, it will be better for you." The Muslim is commanded (in the chapter from which the above extract is taken), when he contracts a debt, to cause a statement of it to be written, and attested by two men, or a man and two

* The portions of the *Kur-án* upon which the above laws are founded are verses 12—15, and the last verse, of chap. iv.

† The reader may see them in D'Olisson's work before mentioned.

‡ Chap. ii., v. 280.

women, of his own faith. The debtor is imprisoned for non-payment of his debt; but if he establish his insolvency, he is liberated. He may be compelled to work for the discharge of his debt, if able.

The Kur-án ordains that *murder* shall be punished with death; or rather, that the free shall die for the free, the slave for the slave, and a woman for a woman; or that the perpetrator of the crime shall pay to the heirs of the person whom he has killed, if they allow it, a fine, which is to be divided according to the laws of inheritance.* It also ordains that *unintentional homicide* shall be expiated by freeing a believer from slavery, and paying, to the family of the person killed, a fine, unless they remit it.† But these laws are amplified and explained by the same book and by the Imáms.—A fine is not to be accepted for murder unless the crime has been attended by some palliating circumstance. This fine, which is the price of blood, is a hundred camels; or a thousand deenárs (about 500*l.*) from him who possesses gold; or from him who possesses silver, twelve thousand dirhems‡ (about 300*l.*). This is for killing a free man; for a woman, half the sum: for a slave, his or her value; but that must fall short of the price of blood for the free. A person unable to free a believer must fast two months, as in Ramadán. The accomplices of a murderer are liable to the punishment of death. By the Sunneh also, a man is obnoxious to capital punishment for the murder of a woman; and by the Hanafee law for the murder of another man's slave. But he is exempted from this punishment who kills his own child or other descendant, or his own slave, or his son's slave, or a slave of whom he is part-owner: so also are his accomplices; and according to Esh-Sháfe'ee, a Muslim, though a slave, is not to be put to death for killing an infidel, though the latter be free. In the present day, however, murder is generally punished with death; the government seldom allowing a composition in money to be made. A man who kills another in self-defence, or to defend his property from a

* Chap. ii., v. 173.

† Chap. iv. v. 94.

Or, according to some, ten thousand dirhems.

robber, is exempt from all punishment. The price of blood is a debt incumbent on the family, tribe, or association of which the homicide is a member. It is also incumbent on the inhabitants of an enclosed quarter, or the proprietor or proprietors of a field in which the body of a person killed by an unknown hand is found ; unless the person has been found killed in his own house. A woman, convicted of a capital crime, is generally put to death by drowning in the Nile.

The Bedaweess have made the law of the avenging of blood terribly severe and unjust, transgressing the limits assigned by the *Kur-án* : for, with them, any single person descended from the homicide, or from the homicide's father, grandfather, great-grandfather, or great-grandfather's father, may be killed by any of such relations of the person murdered or killed in fight ; but, among most tribes, the fine is generally accepted instead of the blood. Cases of blood-revenge are very common among the peasantry of Egypt, who, as I have before remarked, retain many customs of their Bedawee ancestors. The relations of a person who has been killed, in an Egyptian village, generally retaliate with their own hands rather than apply to the government, and often do so with disgusting cruelty, and even mangle and insult the corpse of their victim. The relations of a homicide usually fly from their own to another village, for protection. Even when retaliation has been made, animosity frequently continues between the two parties for many years ; and often a case of blood-revenge involves the inhabitants of two or more villages in hostilities, which are renewed, at intervals, during the period of several generations.

Retaliation for intentional *wounds* and *mutilations* is allowed, like as for murder ; "eye for eye," &c. ; * but a fine may be accepted instead, which the law allows also for unintentional injuries. The fine for a member that is single (as the nose) is the whole price of blood, as for homicide ; for a member of which there are two, and not more, (as a hand,) half the price of blood ; for one of

which there are ten, (a finger or toe,) a tenth of the price of blood: but the fine of a man for maiming or wounding a woman is half of that for the same injury to a man: and that of a free person for injuring a slave varies according to the value of the slave. The fine for depriving a man of any of his five senses, or dangerously wounding him, or grievously disfiguring him for life, is the whole price of blood.

Theft, whether committed by a man or by a woman, according to the *Kur-án*,* is to be punished by cutting off the offender's right hand for the first offence; but a *Sunneh* law ordains that this punishment shall not be inflicted if the value of the stolen property is less than a quarter of a *deenár*;† and it is also held necessary, to render the thief obnoxious to this punishment, that the property stolen should have been deposited in a place to which he had not ordinary or easy access: whence it follows, that a man who steals in the house of a near relation is not subject to this punishment; nor is a slave who robs the house of his master. For the second offence, the left foot is to be cut off; for the third, according to the *Sháfe'ee* law, the left hand; for the fourth, the right foot; and for further offences of the same kind, the culprit is to be flogged or beaten; or, by the *Hanafee* code, for the third and subsequent offences, the criminal is to be punished by a long imprisonment. A man may steal a free-born infant without offending against the law, because it is not property; but not a slave: and the hand is not to be cut off for stealing any article of food that is quickly perishable; because it may have been taken to supply the immediate demands of hunger. There are also some other cases in which the thief is exempt from the punishments above mentioned. In Egypt, of late years, these punishments have not been inflicted. Beating and hard labour have been substituted for the first, second, or third offence, and frequently death for the fourth. Most petty offences

* Chap. v., v. 42.

† The *deenár* is a *mitkál* (or nearly 72 English grains) of gold. Sale, copying a false translation by Marracci, and neglecting to examine the Arabic text quoted by the latter, has stated the sum in question to be four *deenárs*.

are usually punished by beating with the “*kurbág*” (a thong or whip of hippopotamus’ hide, hammered into a round form), or with a stick, generally on the soles of the feet.*

Adultery is most severely visited; but to establish a charge of this crime against a wife, four eye-witnesses are necessary.† If convicted thus, she is to be put to death by stoning.‡ I need scarcely say, that cases of this kind have very seldom occurred, from the difficulty of obtaining such testimony.§ Further laws on this subject, and still more favourable to the women, are given in the *Kur-án*,|| in the following words:—“But [as to] those who accuse women of reputation, [of fornication or adultery,] and produce not four witnesses, [of the fact,] scourge them with eighty stripes, and receive not their testimony for ever; for such are infamous prevaricators: excepting those who shall afterwards repent; for God is gracious and merciful. They who shall accuse their wives, [of adultery,] and shall have no witnesses [thereof] besides themselves, the testimony [which shall be required] of one of them [shall be] that he swear four times by God that he speaketh the truth, and the fifth [time that he imprecate] the curse of God on him if he be a liar; and it shall avert the punishment [of the wife] if she swear four times by God that he is a liar, and if the fifth [time she imprecate] the wrath of God on her if he speak the truth.” The commentators and lawyers have agreed that, under these circumstances, the marriage must

* The feet are confined by a chain or rope attached at each end to a staff, which is turned round to tighten it. This is called a “*falaḥah*.” Two persons (one on each side) strike alternately.

† *Kur-án*, chap. iv., v. 19.

‡ This is a “*Sunneh*” law. The doom, as Mr. Urquhart observes, “stands rather as the expression of public abhorrence, than as a law which is to be carried into execution.” (‘*Spirit of the East*,’ vol. ii., p. 425.) The law is the same in the case of the adulterer, if married; but it is never enforced. See *Leviticus*, xx. 10, and *John*, viii. 4, 5.

§ It is worthy of remark, that the circumstance which occasioned the promulgation of this extraordinary law was an accusation of adultery preferred against the prophet’s favourite wife ‘*A’ishah*: she was thus absolved from punishment, and her reputation was cleared by additional “revelations.”

|| Chap. xxiv., v. 4—9.

be dissolved. In the chapter from which the above quotation is made, it is ordained (in verse 2) that unmarried persons convicted of fornication shall be punished by scourging, with a hundred stripes; and a Sunneh law renders them obnoxious to the further punishment of banishment for a whole year.* Of the punishment of women convicted of incontinence in Cairo, I shall speak in the next chapter; as it is an arbitrary act of the government, not founded on the laws of the Kur-án, or the Traditions.†

Drunkenness was punished, by the Prophet, by flogging; and is still in Cairo, though not often: the “*hadd*,” or number of stripes, for this offence, is eighty in the case of a free man, and forty in that of a slave.

Apostacy from the faith of El-Islám is considered a most heinous sin, and must be punished with death, unless the apostate will recant on being thrice warned. I once saw a woman paraded through the streets of Cairo, and afterwards taken down to the Nile to be drowned, for having apostatized from the faith of Mohámmad, and having married a Christian. Unfortunately, she had tattooed a blue cross on her arm, which led to her detection by one of her former friends in a bath. She was mounted upon a high-saddled ass, such as ladies in Egypt usually ride, and very respectably dressed, attended by soldiers, and surrounded by a rabble, who, instead of commiserating, uttered loud imprecations against her. The Kádée, who passed sentence upon her, exhorted her, in vain, to return to her former faith. Her own father was her accuser! She was taken in a boat into the midst of the river, stripped nearly naked, strangled, and then thrown into the stream.‡ The Europeans residing in

* An unmarried person convicted of adultery is likewise obnoxious only to this punishment. The two laws mentioned in Leviticus, xx. 13 and 15, have been introduced into the Muslim code; but, in the present day, they are never executed.

† In the villages of Egypt, a woman found, or suspected, to have been guilty of this crime, if she be not a common prostitute, often experiences a different fate, which will be described in the account of the domestic life and customs of the lower orders.

‡ The conduct of the lower orders in Cairo on this occasion speaks sadly against their character. A *song* was composed on the victim of this terrible law, and became very popular in the metropolis.

Cairo regretted that the Básha was then at Alexandria, as they might have prevailed upon him to pardon her. Once before they interceded with him for a woman who had been condemned for apostacy. The Básha ordered that she should be brought before him : he exhorted her to recant ; but finding her resolute, reproved her for her *folly*, and sent her home, commanding that no injury should be done to her.

Still more severe is the law with respect to *blasphemy*. The person who utters blasphemy against God, or Moḥammad, or Christ, or Moses, or any Prophet, is to be put to death without delay, even though he profess himself repentant ; repentance for such a sin being deemed impossible. Apostacy or infidelity is occasioned by misjudgment ; but blasphemy is the result of utter depravity.

A few words may here be added respecting the sect of the “Wahhábees,” also called “Wahabees,” which was founded, less than a century ago, by Moḥammad Ibn-’Abd-El-Wahháḅ, a pious and learned sheykh of the province of En-Nejd, in central Arabia. About the middle of the last century, he had the good fortune to convert to his creed a powerful chief of Ed-Dir’eeyeh, the capital of En-Nejd. This chief, Moḥammad Ibn-So’ood, became the sovereign of the new sect—their religious and political head—and under him and his successors the Wahhábee doctrines were spread throughout the greater part of Arabia. He was first succeeded by his son, ’Abd-El-’Azeez ; next by So’ood, the son of the latter, and the greatest of the Wahhábee leaders ; and, lastly, by ’Abd-Allah, the son of this So’ood, who, after an arduous warfare with the armies of Moḥammad ’Alee, surrendered himself to his victorious enemies, was sent to Egypt, thence to Constantinople, and there beheaded. The wars which Moḥammad ’Alee carried on against the Wahhábees had for their chief object the destruction of the political power of the new sect : their religious tenets are still professed by many of the Arabs, and allowed to be orthodox by the most learned of the ’Ulama of Egypt. The Wahhábees are merely reformers, who believe all the fundamental points of El-Islám, and all the accessory

doctrines of the Kur-án and the Traditions of the Prophet: in short, their tenets are those of the primitive Muslims. They disapprove of gorgeous sepulchres, and domes erected over tombs: such they invariably destroy when in their power. They also condemn, as idolaters, those who pay peculiar veneration to deceased saints; and even declare all other Muslims to be heretics, for the extravagant respect which they pay to the Prophet. They forbid the wearing of silk, and gold ornaments, and all costly apparel; and also the practice of smoking tobacco. For the want of this last luxury, they console themselves in some degree by an immoderate use of coffee.* There are many learned men among them, and they have collected many valuable books (chiefly historical) from various parts of Arabia and from Egypt.

* Among many other erroneous statements respecting the Wahhábees, it has been asserted that they prohibit the drinking of coffee.

CHAPTER IV.

GOVERNMENT.

EGYPT has, of late years, experienced great political changes, and nearly ceased to be a province of the Turkish Empire. Its present Básha (Mohammad 'Alee), having exterminated the Ghuzz, or Memlooks, who shared the government with his predecessors, has rendered himself almost an independent prince. He, however, professes allegiance to the Sultán, and remits the tribute, according to former custom, to Constantinople: he is, moreover, under an obligation to respect the fundamental laws of the *Kur-án* and the Traditions; but he exercises a dominion otherwise unlimited.* He may cause any one of his subjects to be put to death without the formality of a trial, or without assigning any cause: a simple horizontal motion of his hand is sufficient to imply the sentence of decapitation. But I must not be understood to insinuate that he is prone to shed blood without any reason: severity is a characteristic of this prince, rather than wanton cruelty; and boundless ambition has prompted him to almost every act by which he has attracted either praise or censure.†

* Though his territory has been greatly lessened since the above was written, his power in Egypt remains nearly the same.

† The government of Egypt, from the period of the conquest of this country by the Arabs, has been nearly the same as it is at present in its influence upon the manners and customs and character of the inhabitants; and I therefore do not deem an historical retrospect necessary to the illustration of this work. It should, however, be mentioned, that the people of Egypt are not now allowed to indulge in that excessive fanatical rudeness with which they formerly treated unbelievers; and hence European travellers have one great cause for gratitude to Mohammad 'Alee. Restraint may, at first, increase, but will probably, in the course of time, materially diminish, the feeling of fanatical intolerance.

In the Citadel of the Metropolis is a court of judicature, called “ed-Deewán el-Khideewee,”* where, in the Básha’s absence, presides his “Kikhya,”† or deputy, Habeeb Efendee. In cases which do not fall within the province of the Kádee, or which are sufficiently clear to be decided without referring them to the court of that officer, or to another council, the president of the Deewán el-Khideewee passes judgment. Numerous guard-houses have been established throughout the metropolis, at each of which is stationed a body of Nizám, or regular troops. The guard is called “Kulluk,”‡ or, more commonly, at present, “Karakol.”§ Persons accused of thefts, assaults, &c., in Cairo, are given in charge to a soldier of the guard, who takes them to the chief guard-house, in the Mooskee, a street in that part of the town in which most of the Franks reside. The charges being here stated, and committed to writing, he conducts them to the “Zábit,” or chief magistrate of the police of the metropolis. The Zábit, having heard the case, sends the accused for trial to the Deewán el-Khideewee.¶ When a person denies the offence with which he is charged, and there is not sufficient evidence to convict him, but some ground of suspicion, he is generally bastinadoed, in order to induce him to confess; and then, if not before, when the crime is not of a nature that renders him obnoxious to a very heavy punishment, he, if guilty, admits it. A thief, after this discipline, generally confesses, “The devil seduced me, and I took it.” The punishment of the convicts is regulated by a system of arbitrary, but lenient and wise policy: it usually consists in their being compelled to labour, for a scanty suste-

* “Khideewee” is a relative adjective formed from the Turkish “Khideev,” which signifies “a prince.”

† Thus pronounced in Egypt, but more properly “Kyálhya” or “Ketklud’a.”

‡ From the Turkish “Kool-luk.”

§ Vulgarly, “Karakón.”

¶ A very arbitrary power is often exercised in this and similar courts, and the proceedings are conducted with little decorum. Many Turkish officers, even of the highest rank, make use of language far too disgusting for me to mention, towards persons brought before them for judgment, and towards those who appeal to them for justice.

nance, in some of the public works; such as the removal of rubbish, digging canals, &c.; and sometimes the army is recruited with able-bodied young men convicted of petty offences. In employing malefactors in labours for the improvement of the country, Moḥammad 'Alee merits the praises bestowed upon Sabacon, the Ethiopian conqueror and king of Egypt, who is said to have introduced this policy. The Básha is, however, very severe in punishing thefts, &c. committed against himself:—death is the usual penalty in such cases.

There are several inferior councils for conducting the affairs of different departments of the administration. The principal of these are the following:—1. The “Meglis el-Meshwar'ah” (the Council of Deliberation); also called “Meglis el-Meshwar'ah el-Melekeeyeh” (the Council of Deliberation on the Affairs of the State). to distinguish it from other councils. The members of this and of the other similar councils are chosen by the Básha, for their talents or other qualifications; and consequently his will and interest sway them in all their decisions. They are his instruments, and compose a committee for presiding over the general government of the country, and the commercial and agricultural affairs of the Básha. Petitions, &c., addressed to the Básha, or to his Deewán, relating to private interests or the affairs of the government, are generally submitted to their consideration and judgment, unless they more properly come under the cognizance of other councils hereafter to be mentioned. 2. The “Meglis el-Gihádeeyeh” (the Council of the Army); also called “Meglis el-Meshwar'ah el-'Askereeyeh” (the Council of Deliberation on Military Affairs). The province of this court is sufficiently shown by its name. 3. The Council of the “Tarskháneh,” or Navy. 4. The “Deewán et-Tug-gár” (or Court of the Merchants). This court, the members of which are merchants of various countries and religions, presided over by the “Sháh-bandar” (or chief of the merchants of Cairo), was instituted in consequence of the laws of the Ḳur-án and the Sunneh

being found not sufficiently explicit in some cases arising out of modern commercial transactions.

The "Kádee" (or chief judge) of Cairo presides in Egypt only a year, at the expiration of which term, a new Kádee having arrived from Constantinople, the former returns. It was customary for this officer to proceed from Cairo, with the great caravan of pilgrims, to Mekkeh, perform the ceremonies of the pilgrimage, and remain one year as Kádee of the holy city, and one year at El-Medeeneh.* He purchases his place privately of the government, which pays no particular regard to his qualifications; though he must be a man of some knowledge, an 'Osmánlee (that is, a Turk), and of the sect of the Hanafees. His tribunal is called the "Mahkem'eh," or Place of Judgment. Few Kádees are very well acquainted with the Arabic language; nor is it necessary for them to have such knowledge. In Cairo the Kádee has little or nothing to do but to confirm the sentence of his "Náib" (or deputy), who hears and decides the more ordinary cases, and whom he chooses from among the 'Ulama of Istanbool, or the decision of the "Muftee" (or chief doctor of the law) of his own sect, who constantly resides in Cairo, and gives judgment in all cases of difficulty. But in general the Náib is, at the best, but little conversant with the popular dialect of Egypt; therefore, in Cairo, where the chief proportion of the litigants at the Mahkem'eh are Arabs, the judge must place the utmost confidence in the "Básh Turgumán" (or Chief Interpreter), whose place is permanent, and who is consequently well acquainted with all the customs of the court, particularly with the system of bribery; and this knowledge he is generally very ready to communicate to every new Kádee and Náib. A man may be grossly ignorant of the law, and yet hold the office of Kádee of Cairo: several instances of this kind

* He used to arrive in Cairo in the beginning of Ramaḍán; but the beginning of the first month, Moharram, has of late been fixed upon, instead of the former period.

have occurred ; but the Náib must be a lawyer of learning and experience.

When a person has a suit to prefer at the Maḥkem'eh against another individual or party, he goes thither, and applies to the " Básh Rusul " (or chief of the bailiffs or sergeants who execute arrests) for a " Rasool " to arrest the accused. The Rasool receives a piaster or two,* and generally gives half of this fee privately to his chief. The plaintiff and defendant then present themselves in the great hall of the Maḥkem'eh ; which is a large saloon, facing a spacious court, and having an open front, formed by a row of columns and arches. Here are seated several officers called " Sháhids," whose business is to hear and write the statements of the case to be submitted to judgment, and who are under the authority of the " Básh Kátib " (or Chief Secretary). The plaintiff, addressing any one of the Sháhids whom he finds unoccupied, states his case, and the Sháhid commits it to writing, and receives a fee of a piaster or more ; after which, if the case be of a trifling nature, and the defendant acknowledge the justice of the suit, he (the Sháhid) passes sentence ; but otherwise he conducts the two parties before the Náib, who holds his court in an inner apartment. The Náib, having heard the case, desires the plaintiff to procure a " fetwa " (or judicial decision) from the Muftée of the sect of the Hanafees, who receives a fee, seldom less than ten piasters, and often more than a hundred or two hundred. This is the course pursued in all cases but those of a very trifling nature, which are settled with less trouble, and those of great importance or intricacy. A case of the latter kind is tried in the private apartment of the Kádee, before the Kádee himself, the Náib, and the Muftée of the Hanafees, who is summoned to hear it, and to give his decision ; and sometimes, in cases of very great difficulty or moment, several of the 'Ulama of Cairo are, in like manner, summoned. The Muftée hears the case, and

* The Egyptian piaster is now equivalent to the fifth part of a shilling, or $2\frac{1}{3}d.$

writes his sentence ; and the Kádee confirms his judgment, and stamps the paper with his seal, which is all that he has to do in any case. The accused may clear himself by his oath, when the plaintiff has not witnesses to produce : placing his right hand on a copy of the Kur-án, which is held out to him, he says, " By God, the Great ! " three times ; adding, " By what is contained in this of the word of God ! " The witnesses must be men of good repute, or asserted to be such, and not interested in the cause : in every case at least two witnesses are requisite * (or one man and two women) ; and each of these must be attested to be a person of probity by two others. An infidel cannot bear witness against a Muslim in a case involving capital or other heavy punishment ; and evidence in favour of a son or grandson, or of a father or grandfather, is not received ; nor is the testimony of slaves ; neither can a master testify in favour of his slave.

The fees, until lately, used to be paid by the successful party ; but now they are paid by the other party. The Kádee's fees for decisions in cases respecting the sale of property are two per cent. on the amount of the property : in cases of legacies, four per cent., excepting when the heir is an orphan not of age, who pays only two per cent. : for decisions respecting property in houses or land, when the cost of the property in question is known, his fees are two per cent. ; but when the cost is not known, one year's rent. These are the legitimate fees ; but more than the due amount is often exacted. In cases which do not concern property, the Kádee's Náib fixes the amount of the fees. There are also other fees than those of the Kádee to be paid after the decision of the case : for instance, if the Kádee's fees be two or three hundred piasters, a fee of about two piasters must be paid to the Básh Turgumán ; about the same to the Básh Rusul ; and one piaster to the Rasool, or to each Rasool employed.

* This law is borrowed from the Jews. See Deut. xix. 15.—A man may refuse to give his testimony.

The rank of a plaintiff or defendant, or a bribe from either, often influences the decision of the judge. In general the Náib and Muftée take bribes, and the Kádee receives from his Náib. On some occasions, particularly in long litigations, bribes are given by each party, and the decision is awarded in favour of him who pays highest. This frequently happens in difficult law-suits; and even in cases respecting which the law is perfectly clear, strict justice is not always administered; bribes and false testimony being employed by one of the parties. The shocking extent to which the practices of bribery and suborning false witnesses are carried in Muslim courts of law, and among them in the tribunal of the Kádee of Cairo, may be scarcely credited on the bare assertion of the fact: some strong proof, resting on indubitable authority, may be demanded; and here I shall give such proof, in a summary of a case which was tried not long since, and which was related to me by the Secretary and Imám of the Sheykh El-Mahdee, who was then supreme Muftée of Cairo (being the chief Muftée of the Hanafees), and to whom this case was referred after judgment in the Kádee's court.

A Turkish merchant, residing at Cairo, died, leaving property to the amount of six thousand purses,* and no relation to inherit but one daughter. The seyyid Mohámmad El-Mahrookee, the Sháh-bandar (chief of the merchants of Cairo), hearing of this event, suborned a common felláh, who was the bowwáb (or door-keeper) of a respected sheykh, and whose parents (both of them Arabs) were known to many persons, to assert himself a son of a brother of the deceased. The case was brought before the Kádee, and, as it was one of considerable importance, several of the principal 'Ulama of the city were summoned to decide it. They were all bribed or influenced by El-Mahrookee, as will presently be shown; false witnesses were brought forward to swear to the truth of the bowwáb's pretensions, and others to give

* A purse is the sum of five hundred piasters, and was then equivalent to nearly seven pounds sterling, but is now equal to only five pounds.

testimony to the good character of these witnesses. Three thousand purses were adjudged to the daughter of the deceased, and the other half of the property to the bowwáb. El-Mahrookee received the share of the latter, deducting only three hundred piasters, which he presented to the bowwáb. The chief Muftee, El-Mahdee, was absent from Cairo when the case was tried. On his return to the metropolis, a few days after, the daughter of the deceased merchant repaired to his house, stated her case to him, and earnestly solicited redress. The Muftee, though convinced of the injustice which she had suffered, and not doubting the truth of what she related respecting the part which El Mahrookee had taken in this affair, told her that he feared it was impossible for him to annul the judgment, unless there were some informality in the proceedings of the court, but that he would look at the record of the case in the register of the Mahkem'eh. Having done this, he betook himself to the Básha, with whom he was in great favour for his knowledge and inflexible integrity, and complained to him that the tribunal of the Kádee was disgraced by the administration of the most flagrant injustice; that false witness was admitted by the 'Ulama, however evident and glaring it might be; and that a judgment which they had given in a late case, during his absence, was the general talk and wonder of the town. The Básha summoned the Kádee and all the 'Ulama who had tried this case, to meet the Muftee in the Citadel; and when they had assembled there, addressed them, as from himself, with the Muftee's complaint. The Kádee, appearing, like the 'Ulama, highly indignant at this charge, demanded to know upon what it was grounded. The Básha replied that it was a general charge, but particularly grounded on the case in which the court had admitted the claim of a bowwáb to a relationship and inheritance which they could not believe to be his right. The Kádee here urged that he had passed sentence in accordance with the unanimous decision of the 'Ulama then present. "Let the record of the case be read," said the Básha. The journal being sent for, this was done; and when the se-

cretary had finished reading the minutes, the Kádee, in a loud tone of proud authority, said, "And I judged so." The Muftée, in a louder and more authoritative tone, exclaimed, "And thy judgment is false!" All eyes were fixed in astonishment, now at the Muftée, now at the Básha, now at the other 'Ulama. The Kádee and the 'Ulama rolled their heads and stroked their beards. The former exclaimed, tapping his breast, "I, the Kádee of Mişr, pass a false sentence!" "And we," said the 'Ulama, we, Sheykh Mahdee! we 'Ulama el-Islám, give a false decision!" "O Sheykh Mahdee," said El-Mahrookee (who, from his commercial transactions with the Básha, could generally obtain a place in his councils), "respect the 'Ulama as they respect thee!" "O Mahrookee!" exclaimed the Muftée, "art thou concerned in this affair? Declare what part thou hast in it, or else hold thy peace: go, speak in the assemblies of the merchants, but presume not again to open thy mouth in the council of the 'Ulama!" El-Mahrookee immediately left the palace, for he saw how the affair would terminate, and had to make his arrangements accordingly. The Muftée was now desired, by the other 'Ulama, to adduce a proof of the invalidity of their decision. Drawing from his bosom a small book on the laws of inheritance, he read from it, "To establish a claim to relationship and inheritance, the names of the father and mother of the claimant, and those of his father's father and mother, and of his mother's father and mother, must be ascertained." The names of the father and mother of the pretended father of the bowwáb the false witnesses had not been prepared to give; and this deficiency in the testimony (which the 'Ulama, in trying the case, purposely overlooked) now caused the sentence to be annulled. The bowwáb was brought before the council, and, denying the imposition of which he had been made the principal instrument, was, by order of the Básha, very severely bastinaded; but the only confession that could be drawn from him by the torture which he endured was, that he had received nothing more of the three thousand purses than three hundred piasters.

Meanwhile, El-Mahrookee had repaired to the bowwáb's master: he told the latter what had happened at the Citadel, and what he had foreseen would be the result, put into his hand three thousand purses, and begged him immediately to go to the council, give this sum of money, and say that it had been placed in his hands in trust by his servant. This was done, and the money was paid to the daughter of the deceased.

In another case, when the Kádee and the council of the 'Ulama were influenced in their decision by a Básha (not Moḥammad 'Alee), and passed a sentence contrary to law, they were thwarted in the same manner by El-Mahdee. This Muftée was a rare example of integrity. It is said that he never took a fee for a fetwa. He died shortly after my first visit to this country.—I could mention several other glaring cases of bribery in the court of the Kádee of Cairo; but the above is sufficient.

There are five minor Maḥkem'ehs in Cairo; and likewise one at its principal port, Boolák; and one at its southern port, Maṣr El-'Ateeḡah. A Sháhid from the great Maḥkem'eh presides at each of them, as deputy of the chief Kádee, who confirms their acts. The matters submitted to these minor tribunals are chiefly respecting the sales of property, and legacies, marriages, and divorces; for the Kádee marries female orphans under age who have no relations of age to act as their guardians; and wives often have recourse to law to compel their husbands to divorce them. In every country-town there is also a Kádee, generally a native of the place, and never a Turk, who decides all cases, sometimes from his own knowledge of the law, but commonly on the authority of a Muftée. One Kádee generally serves for two or three or more villages.

Each of the four orthodox sects of the Muslims (the Hanafees, Sháfe'ees, Málikees, and Hāmbel'ees) has its "Sheykh," or religious chief, who is chosen from among the most learned of the body, and resides in the metropolis. The Sheykh of the great mosque El-Azhar (who is always of the sect of the Sháfe'ees, and sometimes Sheykh of that sect), together with the other Sheykh

above mentioned, and the Kádee, the Nakëeb el-Ashráf (the chief of the Shereefs, or descendants of the Prophet), and several other persons, constitute the council of the 'Ulama * (or learned men), by whom the Turkish Báshas and Memlook chiefs have often been kept in awe, and by whom their tyranny has frequently been restricted: but now this learned body has lost almost all its influence over the government. Petty disputes are often, by mutual consent of the parties at variance, submitted to the judgment of one of the four Sheykhs first mentioned, as they are the chief Muftees of their respective sects; and the utmost deference is always paid to them. Difficult and delicate causes, which concern the laws of the Kur-án or the Traditions, are also frequently referred by the Básha to these Sheykhs; but their opinion is not always followed by him: for instance, after consulting them respecting the legality of dissecting human bodies, for the sake of acquiring anatomical knowledge, and receiving their declaration that it was repugnant to the laws of the religion, he, nevertheless, has caused it to be practised by Muslim students of anatomy.

The police of the metropolis is more under the direction of the military than of the civil power. A few years ago it was under the authority of the "Wálee" and the "Zábit;" but since my first visit to this country the office of the former has been abolished. He was charged with the apprehension of thieves and other criminals; and under his jurisdiction were the public women, of whom he kept a list, and from each of whom he exacted a tax. He also took cognizance of the conduct of the women in general; and when he found a female to have been guilty of a single act of incontinence, he added her name to the list of the public women, and demanded from her the tax, unless she preferred, or could afford, to escape that ignominy, by giving to him, or to his officers, a considerable bribe. This course was always pursued, and is still, by a person who farms the tax of the public

* In the singular "A'lim." This title is more particularly given to a professor of jurisprudence. European writers generally use the plural form of this appellation for the singular.

women,* in the case of unmarried females, and generally in the case of the married also; but the latter are sometimes privately put to death, if they cannot, by bribery or some other artifice, save themselves. Such proceedings are, however, in two points, contrary to the law, which ordains that a person who accuses a woman of adultery or fornication, without producing four witnesses of the crime, shall be scourged with eighty stripes, and decrees other punishments than those of degradation and tribute against women convicted of such offences.

The office of the *Zâbit* has before been mentioned. He is now the chief of the police. His officers, who have no distinguishing mark to render them known as such, are interspersed through the metropolis: they often visit the coffee-shops, and observe the conduct, and listen to the conversation, of the citizens. Many of them are pardoned thieves. They accompany the military guards in their nightly rounds through the streets of the metropolis. Here, none but the blind are allowed to go out at night later than about an hour and a half after sunset, without a lantern or a light of some kind. Few persons are seen in the streets later than two or three hours after sunset. At the fifth or sixth hour, one might pass through the whole length of the metropolis and scarcely meet more than a dozen or twenty persons, excepting the watchmen and guards, and the porters at the gates of the by-streets and quarters. The sentinel, or guard, calls out to the approaching passenger, in Turkish, "Who is that?"† and is answered, in Arabic, "A citizen."‡ The private watchman, in the same case, exclaims, "Attest the unity of God!"§ or merely, "Attest the unity!"|| The reply given to this is, "There is no deity but God!"¶ which Christians, as well as Muslims, object not to say; the former under-

* Since this was written, the public women throughout Egypt have been compelled to relinquish their licentious profession.

† "Keemen dur ó," for "keem dur ó."

‡ "Ibn beled." If blind, he answers "Aḡama."

§ "Wahhed Alláh."

|| "Wahhed;" or, to more than one person, "Wahhedoo."

¶ "Lá iláha illa-lláh."

standing these words in a different sense from the latter. It is supposed that a thief, or a person bound on any unlawful undertaking, would not dare to utter these words. Some persons loudly exclaim, in reply to the summons of the watchman, "There is no deity but God : Mohámmad is God's Apostle." The private watchmen are employed to guard, by night, the sooks (or market-streets) and other districts of the town. They carry a nebbot (or long staff), but no lantern.

The Zábít, or A'gha of the police, used frequently to go about the metropolis by night, often accompanied only by the executioner and the "shealeg'ee," or bearer of a kind of torch called "shealeh," which is still in use.* This torch burns, soon after it is lighted, without a flame, excepting when it is waved through the air, when it suddenly blazes forth : it therefore answers the same purpose as our dark lantern. The burning end is sometimes concealed in a small pot or jar, or covered with something else, when not required to give light ; but it is said that thieves often smell it in time to escape meeting the bearer. When a person without a light is met by the police at night, he seldom attempts resistance or flight ; the punishment to which he is liable is beating. The chief of the police had an arbitrary power to put any criminal or offender to death without trial, and when not obnoxious, by law, to capital punishment ; and so also had many inferior officers, as will be seen in subsequent pages of this work : but within the last two or three years, instances of the exercise of such power have been very rare, and I believe they would not now be permitted. The officers of the Zábít perform their nightly rounds with the military guards merely as being better acquainted than the latter with the haunts and practices of thieves and other bad characters ; and the Zábít himself scarcely ever exercises any penal authority beyond that of beating or flogging.

* Baron Hammer-Purgstall is mistaken in substituting "Meshaale-dschi" for "Shealeg'ee." The officer who bears the latter appellation does not carry a mesh'al, but a twisted torch. The mesh'al is described and figured in Chapter VI.

Very curious measures, such as we read of in some of the tales of 'The Thousand and One Nights,' were often adopted by the police magistrates of Cairo, to discover an offender, before the late innovations. I may mention an instance. The authenticity of the following case, and of several others of a similar nature, is well known. I shall relate it in the manner in which I have heard it told. A poor man applied one day to the A'gha of the police, and said, "Sir, there came to me to-day a woman, and she said to me, 'Take this "kurs,"* and let it remain in your possession for a time, and lend me five hundred piasters:' and I took it from her, Sir, and gave her the five hundred piasters, and she went away: and when she was gone away, I said to myself, 'Let me look at this kurs;'" and I looked at it, and behold, it was yellow brass: and I slapped my face, and said, 'I will go to the A'gha, and relate my story to him; perhaps he will investigate the affair, and clear it up;' for there is none that can help me in this matter but thou." The A'gha said to him, "Hear what I tell thee, man. Take whatever is in thy shop; leave nothing; and lock it up; and to-morrow morning go early; and when thou hast opened the shop, cry out, 'Alas for my property!' then take in thy hands two clods, and beat thyself with them, and cry, 'Alas for the property of others!' and whoever says to thee, 'What is the matter with thee?' do thou answer, 'The property of others is lost: a pledge that I had, belonging to a woman, is lost; if it were my own, I should not thus lament it;' and this will clear up the affair." The man promised to do as he was desired. He removed everything from his shop, and early the next morning he went and opened it, and began to cry out, "Alas for the property of others!" and he took two clods, and beat himself with them, and went about every district of the city, crying, "Alas for the property of others! a pledge that I had, belonging to a woman, is lost; if it were my own, I should not thus lament it." The woman who had given him the kurs in

* An ornament worn on the crown of the head-dress by women, described in the Appendix to this work.

pledge heard of this, and discovered that it was the man whom she had cheated ; so she said to herself, " Go and bring an action against him." She went to his shop, riding on an ass, to give herself consequence, and said to him, " Man, give me my property that is in thy possession." He answered, " It is lost." " Thy tongue be cut out!" she cried: " dost thou lose my property? By Allah! I will go to the A'gha, and inform him of it." " Go," said he; and she went, and told her case. The Agha sent for the man; and, when he had come, said to his accuser, " What is thy property in his possession?" She answered, " A *kurş* of red Venetian gold." " Woman," said the A'gha, " I have a gold *kurş* here: I should like to show it thee." She said, " Show it me, Sir, for I shall know my *kurş*." The A'gha then untied a handkerchief, and, taking out of it the *kurş* which she had given in pledge, said, " Look." She looked at it and knew it, and hung down her head. The A'gha said, " Raise thy head, and say where are the five hundred piasters of this man." She answered, " Sir, they are in my house." The executioner was sent with her to her house, but without his sword; and the woman, having gone into the house, brought out a purse containing the money, and went back with him. The money was given to the man from whom it had been obtained, and the executioner was then ordered to take the woman to the Rumeyleh (a large open place below the Citadel), and there to behead her; which he did.

The markets of Cairo, and the weights and measures, are under the inspection of an officer called the " *Moh-tes'ib*." He occasionally rides about the town, preceded by an officer who carries a large pair of scales, and followed by the executioners and numerous other servants. Passing by shops, or through the markets, he orders each shopkeeper, one after another, or sometimes only one here and there, to produce his scales, weights, and measures, and tries whether they be correct. He also inquires the prices of provisions at the shops where such articles are sold. Often, too, he stops a servant, or other passenger, in the street, whom he may chance to meet

carrying any article of food that he has just bought, and asks him for what sum, or at what weight, he purchased it. When he finds that a shopkeeper has incorrect scales, weights, or measures, or that he has sold a thing deficient in weight, or above the regular market-price, he punishes him on the spot. The general punishment is beating or flogging. Once I saw a man tormented in a different way, for selling bread deficient in weight. A hole was bored through his nose, and a cake of bread, about a span wide, and a finger's breadth in thickness, was suspended to it by a piece of string. He was stripped naked, with the exception of having a piece of linen about his loins, and tied, with his arms bound behind him, to the bars of a window of a mosque called the Ashrafceeyeh, in the main street of the metropolis, his feet resting upon the sill. He remained thus about three hours, exposed to the gaze of the multitude which thronged the street, and to the scorching rays of the sun.

A person who was appointed Mohtes'ib shortly after my former visit to this country (Mustaf'a Káshif, a Kurd) exercised his power in a most brutal manner, clipping men's ears (that is, cutting off the lobe, or ear-lap), not only for the most trifling transgression, but often for no offence whatever. He once met an old man, driving along several asses laden with water-melons, and, pointing to one of the largest of these fruits, asked its price. The old man put his finger and thumb to his ear-lap, and said, "Cut it, Sir." He was asked again and again, and gave the same answer. The Mohtes'ib, angry, but unable to refrain from laughing, said, "Fellow, are you mad or deaf?" "No," replied the old man, "I am neither mad nor deaf; but I know that, if I were to say the price of the melon is ten faddahs, you would say, 'Clip his ear;' and if I said *five* faddahs, or *one* faddah, you would say, 'Clip his ear;' therefore clip it at once, and let me pass on." His humour saved him. Clipping ears was the usual punishment inflicted by this Mohtes'ib; but sometimes he tortured in a different manner. A butcher, who had sold some meat wanting

two ounces of its due weight, he punished by cutting off two ounces of flesh from his back. A seller of "kunáfeh" (a kind of paste resembling vermicelli), having made his customers pay a trifle more than was just, he caused him to be stripped, and seated upon the round copper tray on which the kunáfeh was baked, and kept so until he was dreadfully burnt. He generally punished dishonest butchers by putting a hook through their nose, and hanging a piece of meat to it. Meeting, one day, a man carrying a large crate full of earthen water-bottles from Semennood, which he offered for sale as made at Kínë, he caused his attendants to break each bottle separately against the vender's head. Muṣṭaf'a Káshif also exercised his tyranny in other cases than those which properly fell under his jurisdiction. He once took a fancy to send one of his horses to a bath, and desired the keeper of a bath in his neighbourhood to prepare for receiving it, and to wash it well, and make its coat very smooth. The bath-keeper, annoyed at so extraordinary a command, ventured to suggest that, as the pavements of the bath were of marble, the horse might slip, and fall; and also, that it might take cold on going out; and that it would therefore be better for him to convey to the stable the contents of the cistern of the bath in buckets, and there to perform the operation. Muṣṭaf'a Káshif said, "I see how it is; you do not like that my horse should go into your bath." He desired some of his servants to throw him down, and beat him with staves until he should tell them to stop. They did so; and beat the poor man till he died.

A few years ago there used to be carried before the Mohtes'ib, when going his rounds to examine the weights and measures, &c., a pair of scales larger than that used at present. Its beam, it is said, was a hollow tube, containing some quicksilver, by means of which the bearer, knowing those persons who had bribed his master, and those who had not, easily made either scale preponderate.

As the Mohtes'ib is the overseer of the public mar-

kets, so there are officers who have a similar charge in superintending each branch of the Básha's trade and manufactures; and some of these persons have been known to perpetrate most abominable acts of tyranny and cruelty. One of this class, who was named 'Alee Bey, "Názir el-Ḳumásh" (or Overseer of the Linen), when he found a person in possession of a private loom, or selling the produce of such a loom, generally bound him up in a piece of his linen, soaked in oil and tar; then suspended him, thus enveloped, to a branch of a tree, and set light to the wrapper. After having destroyed a number of men in this horrible manner, he was himself, among many others, burnt to death by the explosion of a powder-magazine on the northern slope of the Citadel of Cairo in 1824, the year before my first arrival in Egypt. A friend of mine, who spoke to me of the atrocities of this monster, added, "When his corpse was taken to be buried, the Sheykh El-'Aroosee (who was Sheykh of the great mosque El-Azhar) recited the funeral prayers over it in the mosque of the Ḥasaneyn; and I acted as "muballigh" (to repeat the words of the Imám): when the Sheykh uttered the words, 'Give your testimony respecting him,' and when I had repeated them, no one of all the persons present, and they were many, presumed to give the answer, 'He was of the virtuous:' all were silent. To make the circumstance more glaring, I said again, 'Give your testimony respecting him;' but not an answer was heard: and the Sheykh, in confusion, said, but in a very low voice, 'May God have mercy upon him.' Now we may certainly say of this cursed man," continued my friend, "that he is gone to hell: yet his wife is constantly having 'khatmehs' (recitations of the Ḳur-án) performed in her house for him; and lights two wax candles for his sake every evening at the niche of the mosque of the Ḥasaneyn."

Every quarter in the metropolis has its sheykh, called "Sheykh el-Ḥárah," whose influence is exerted to maintain order, to settle any trifling disputes among the inhabitants, and to expel those who disturb the peace of

their neighbours. The whole of the metropolis is also divided into eight districts, over each of which is a sheykh, called "Sheykh et-Tumn."

The members of various trades and manufactures in the metropolis and other large towns have also their respective sheykhs, to whom all disputes respecting matters connected with those trades or crafts are submitted for arbitration; and whose sanction is required for the admission of new members.

The servants in the metropolis are likewise under the authority of particular sheykhs. Any person in want of a servant may procure one by applying to one of these officers, who, for a small fee (two or three piasters) becomes responsible for the conduct of the man whom he recommends. Should a servant so engaged rob his master, the latter gives information to the sheykh, who, whether he can recover the stolen property or not, must indemnify the master.

Even the common thieves used not many years since to respect a superior, who was called their sheykh. He was often required to search for stolen goods, and to bring offenders to justice; which he generally accomplished. It is very remarkable that the same strange system prevailed among the ancient Egyptians.*

The Coptic Patriarch, who is the head of his church, judges petty causes among his people in the metropolis; and the inferior clergy do the same in other places; but an appeal may be made to the Kádee. A Muslim aggrieved by a Copt may demand justice from the Patriarch or the Kádee: a Copt who seeks redress from a Muslim must apply to the Kádee. The Jews are similarly circumstanced. The Franks, or Europeans in general, are not answerable to any other authority than that of their respective consuls, excepting when they are aggressors against a Muslim; they are then surrendered to the Turkish authorities, who, on the other hand, will render justice to the Frank who is aggrieved by a Muslim.

The inhabitants of the country-towns and villages are

* See Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. cap. 80.

under the government of Turkish officers and of their own countrymen. The whole of Egypt is divided into several large provinces, each of which is governed by an 'Osmánlee (or a Turk); and these provinces are subdivided into districts, which are governed by native officers, with the titles of "Mamoor and Názir." Every village, as well as town, has also its Sheykh, called "Sheykh el-Beled;" who is one of the native Muslim inhabitants. All the officers above mentioned, excepting the last, were formerly Turks; and there were other Turkish governors of small districts, who were called "Káshifs," and "Káim-makáms:" the change was made very shortly before my present visit to this country; and the Felláheen complain that their condition is worse than it was before; but it is generally from the tyranny of their great Turkish governors that they suffer most severely.

The following case will convey some idea of the condition of Egyptian peasants in some provinces. A Turk,* infamous for many barbarous acts, presiding at the town of Tanta, in the Delta, went one night to the government-granary of that town, and finding two peasants sleeping there, asked them who they were, and what was their business in that place. One of them said that he had brought 130 ardebbs of corn from a village of the district; and the other, that he had brought 60 ardebbs from the land belonging to the town. "You rascal!" said the governor to the latter; "this man brings 130 ardebbs from the lands of a small village; and you, but 60 from the lands of the town." "This man," answered the peasant of Tanta, "brings corn but once a week; and I am now bringing it every day." "Be silent!" said the governor; and, pointing to a neighbouring tree, he ordered one of the servants of the granary to hang the peasant to one of its branches. The order was obeyed, and the governor returned to his house. The next morning he went again to the granary, and saw a man bringing in a large quantity of corn. He asked who he was, and what quantity he had brought; and

* Suleymán A'gha, the Silá' dár: he has died since this was written.

was answered, by the hangman of the preceding night, "This is the man, Sir, whom I hanged by your orders, last night; and he has brought 160 ardebbs." "What!" exclaimed the governor: "has he risen from the dead?" He was answered "No, Sir; I hanged him so that his toes touched the ground; and when you were gone, I untied the rope: you did not order me to *kill* him." The Turk muttered, "Aha! hanging and killing are different things: Arabic is copious: next time I will say kill. Take care of Abou-Dá-ood."* This is his nick-name.

Another occurrence may here be aptly related, as a further illustration of the nature of the government to which the people of Egypt are subjected. A felláh, who was appointed Názir (or governor) of the district of El-Manoofeeyeh (the southernmost district of the Delta), a short time before my present visit to Egypt, in collecting the taxes at a village, demanded, of a poor peasant, the sum of sixty riyáls (ninety faddahs each, making a sum total of a hundred and thirty-five piasters, which was then equivalent to about thirty shillings). The poor man urged that he possessed nothing but a cow, which barely afforded sustenance to himself and his family. Instead of pursuing the method usually followed when a felláh declares himself unable to pay the tax demanded of him, which is to give him a severe bastinading, the Názir, in this case, sent the Sheykh-el-Beled to bring the poor peasant's cow, and desired some of the felláheen to buy it. They saying that they had not sufficient money, he sent for a butcher, and desired him to kill the cow; which was done: he then told him to divide it into sixty pieces. The butcher asked for his pay; and was given the head of the cow. Sixty felláheen were then called together; and each of them was compelled to purchase, for a riyál, a piece of the cow. The owner of the cow went, weeping and com-

* Abou-Dá-ood, Abou-'Alee, &c., are patronymics, used by the Egyptian peasants in general, not as signifying "Father of Dá-ood," "Father of 'Alee," &c., but "whose father is (or was) Dá-ood," "—'Alee," &c.

plaining, to the Názir's superior, the late Mohammad Bey, Deftardár. "O my master," said he, "I am oppressed and in misery: I had no property but one cow, a milch cow: I and my family lived upon her milk; and she ploughed for me, and threshed my corn; and my whole subsistence was derived from her: the Názir has taken her, and killed her, and cut her up into sixty pieces, and sold the pieces to my neighbours; to each a piece, for one riyál; so that he obtained but sixty riyáls for the whole, while the value of the cow was a hundred and twenty riyáls, or more. I am oppressed and in misery, and a stranger in the place, for I came from another village; but the Názir had no pity on me. I and my family are become beggars, and have nothing left. Have mercy upon me, and give me justice: I implore it by thy hareem." The Deftardár having caused the Názir to be brought before him, asked him, "Where is the cow of this felláh?" "I have sold it," said the Názir. "For how much?" "For sixty riyáls." "Why did you kill it and sell it?" "He owed sixty riyáls for land: so I took his cow, and killed it, and sold it for the amount." "Where is the butcher that killed it?" "In Manoof." The butcher was sent for, and brought. The Deftardár said to him, "Why did you kill this man's cow?" "The Názir desired me," he answered, "and I could not oppose him: if I had attempted to do so, he would have beaten me, and destroyed my house: I killed it; and the Názir gave me the head as my reward." "Man," said the Deftardár, "do you know the persons who bought the meat?" The butcher replied that he did. The Deftardár then desired his secretary to write the names of the sixty men, and an order to the sheykh of their village to bring them to Manoof, where this complaint was made. The Názir and butcher were placed in confinement till the next morning; when the sheykh of the village came, with the sixty felláheen. The two prisoners were then brought again before the Deftardár, who said to the sheykh and the sixty peasants, "Was the value of this man's cow sixty riyáls?" "O our

master," they answered, "her value was greater." The Deftardár sent for the Kádee of Manoof, and said to him, "O Kádee, here is a man oppressed by this Názir, who has taken his cow, and killed it; and sold its flesh for sixty riyáls. What is thy judgment?" The Kádee replied, "He is a cruel tyrant, who oppresses every one under his authority. Is not a cow worth a hundred and twenty riyáls, or more? and he has sold this one for sixty riyáls: this is tyranny towards the owner." The Deftardár then said to some of his soldiers, "Take the Názir, and strip him, and bind him." This done, he said to the butcher, "Butcher, dost thou not fear God? Thou hast killed the cow unjustly." The butcher again urged that he was obliged to obey the Názir. "Then," said the Deftardár, "if I order thee to do a thing wilt thou do it?" "I will do it," answered the butcher. "Slaughter the Názir," said the Deftardár. Immediately several of the soldiers present seized the Názir, and threw him down; and the butcher cut his throat, in the regular orthodox manner of killing animals for food. "Now, cut him up," said the Deftardár, "into sixty pieces." This was done: the people concerned in the affair, and many others, looking on; but none daring to speak. The sixty peasants who had bought the meat of the cow were then called forward, one after another, and each was made to take a piece of the flesh of the Názir, and to pay for it two riyáls; so that a hundred and twenty riyáls were obtained from them. They were then dismissed; but the butcher remained. The Kádee was asked what should be the reward of the butcher; and answered that he should be paid as he had been paid by the Názir. The Deftardár therefore ordered that the head of the Názir should be given to him; and the butcher went away with his worse than valueless burden, thanking God that he had not been more unfortunate, and scarcely believing himself to have so easily escaped until he arrived at his village. The money paid for the flesh of the Názir was given to the owner of the cow.

Most of the governors of provinces and districts carry their oppression far beyond the limits to which they are authorized to proceed by the Básha; and even the sheykh of a village, in executing the commands of his superiors, abuses his lawful power: bribes, and the ties of relationship and marriage, influence him and them, and by lessening the oppression of some, who are more able to bear it, greatly increase that of others. But the office of a sheykh of a village is far from being a sinecure: at the period when the taxes are demanded of him, he frequently receives a more severe bastinading than any of his inferiors; for when the population of a village does not yield the sum required, their sheykh is often beaten for their default: and not always does he produce his own proportion until he has been well thrashed. All the felláheen are proud of the stripes they receive for withholding their contributions; and are often heard to boast of the number of blows which were inflicted upon them before they would give up their money. Ammianus Marcellinus gives precisely the same character to the Egyptians of his time.*

The revenue of the Básha of Egypt is generally said to amount to about three millions of pounds sterling.† Nearly half arises from the direct taxes on land, and from indirect exactions from the felláheen: the remainder, principally from the custom-taxes, the tax on palm-trees, a kind of income-tax, and the sale of various productions of the land; by which sale, the government, in most instances, obtains a profit of more than fifty per cent.

The present Básha has increased his revenue to this amount by most oppressive measures. He has dispossessed of their lands almost all the private proprietors throughout Egypt, allotting to each, as a partial compensation, a pension for life, proportioned to the extent

* Lib. xxii. The more easily the peasant pays, the more is he made to pay.

† Some estimate is at *five* millions; others, at little more than *two* millions.

and quality of the land which belonged to him. The farmer has, therefore, nothing to leave to his children but his hut, and perhaps a few cattle and some small savings.

The direct taxes on land are proportioned to the natural advantages of the soil. Their average amount is about 8s. per feddán, which is nearly equal to an English acre.* But the cultivator can never calculate exactly the full amount of what the government will require of him: he suffers from indirect exactions of quantities (differing in different years, but always levied per feddán) of butter, honey, wax, wool, baskets of palm-leaves, ropes of the fibres of the palm-tree, and other commodities: he is also obliged to pay the hire of the camels which convey his grain to the government shooneh (or granary), and to defray various other expenses. A portion of the produce of his land is taken by the government,† and sometimes the whole produce, at a fixed and fair price, which, however, in many parts of Egypt, is retained to make up for the debts of the insolvent peasants.‡ The felláh, to supply the bare necessities of life, is often obliged to steal, and convey secretly to his hut, as much as he can of the produce of his land. He may either himself supply the seed for his land, or obtain it as a loan from the government: but in the latter case he seldom obtains a sufficient quantity; a considerable portion being generally stolen by the persons through whose hands it passes before he receives it. To relate all the oppressions which the peasantry of Egypt endure from the dishonesty of the Ma-moors and inferior officers would require too much space in the present work. It would be scarcely possible for them to suffer more, and live. It may be hardly necessary, therefore, to add,

* The feddán has lately been reduced: it was equal to about an English acre and one-tenth a few years ago, and somewhat more at an earlier period.

† Of some productions, as cotton, flax, &c., the government always takes the whole.

‡ Even the debts of the peasantry of one village are often imposed upon the inhabitants of another who have paid all that is justly due from them.

that few of them engage, with assuidity, in the labours of agriculture, unless compelled to do so by their superiors.

The Básha has not only taken possession of the lands of the private proprietors, but he has also thrown into his treasury a considerable proportion of the incomes of religious and charitable institutions, deeming their accumulated wealth superfluous. He first imposed a tax (of nearly half the amount of the regular land-tax) upon all land which had become a "wakf" (or legacy unalienable by law) to any mosque, fountain, public school, &c. : and afterwards took absolute possession of such lands, granting certain annuities in lieu of them, for keeping in repair the respective buildings, and for the maintenance of those persons attached to them, as Názírs (or wardens), religious ministers, inferior servants, students, and other pensioners. He has thus rendered himself extremely odious to most persons of the religious and learned professions, and especially to the Názírs of the mosques, who too generally enriched themselves from the funds intrusted to their care, which were, in most cases, superabundant. The *household* property of the mosques and other public institutions (the wakfs of numerous individuals of various ranks) the Básha has hitherto left inviolate.

The tax upon the palm-trees has been calculated to amount to about a hundred thousand pounds sterling. The trees are rated according to their qualities; generally at a piaster and a half each.

The income-tax, which is called "firdeh," is generally a twelfth or more of a man's annual income or salary, when that can be ascertained. The maximum, however, is fixed at five hundred piasters. In the large towns it is levied upon individuals; in the villages, upon houses. The income-tax of all the inhabitants of the metropolis amounts to eight thousand purses, or about forty thousand pounds sterling.

The inhabitants of the metropolis and of other large towns pay a heavy tax on grain, &c. The tax on each

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kind of grain is eighteen piasters per ardebb (or about five bushels); which sum is equal to the price of wheat in the country after a good harvest.*

* The above account of the government of Egypt, having been written in the years 1834 and 1835, is not altogether correct with respect to the present time. Great changes are now being made in various departments; and as the Básha has no longer to maintain an enormous military and naval force, he will be able to ameliorate very considerably the condition of the people whom he governs. Most of the evils of which the people of Egypt have hitherto had to complain have arisen from the vast expense incurred in war, from the conscription, and from the dishonesty of almost all the Básha's civil officers.

CHAPTER V.

DOMESTIC LIFE.

HAVING sufficiently considered the foundations of the moral and social state of the Muslims of Egypt, we may now take a view of their domestic life and ordinary habits; and, first, let us confine our attention to the higher and middle orders.

A master of a family, or any person who has arrived at manhood, and is not in a menial situation, or of very low condition, is commonly honoured with the appellation of “the sheykh,” prefixed to his name. The word “sheykh” literally signifies “an elder,” or “an aged person;” but it is often used as synonymous with our appellation of “Mister;” though more particularly applied to a learned man, or a reputed saint. A “shereef,” or descendant of the Prophet, is called “the seyd,” or “the seyyid” (master, or lord), whatever be his station. Many shereefs are employed in the lowest offices: there are servants, dustmen, and beggars, of the honoured race of Moḥammad; but all of them are entitled to the distinctive appellation above mentioned, and privileged to wear the green turban;* many of them, however, not only among those of humble station, but also among the wealthy, and particularly the learned, assume neither of these prerogatives; preferring the title of “sheykh,” and the white turban. A man who has performed the pilgrimage is generally called “the ḥágg;”† and a woman

* Men and women of this race often contract marriages with persons who are not members of the same; and as the title of shereef is inherited from either of the parents, the number of persons who enjoy this distinction has become very considerable.

† This word is thus pronounced by the inhabitants of Cairo and the greater part of Egypt; but in most other countries where Arabic is spoken, “ḥájj.” The Turks and Persians use, instead of it, the synonymous Arabic word “ḥájjee.”

who has alike distinguished herself, “the hāggeh :” yet there are many pilgrims who, like those shereefs just before alluded to, prefer the title of “sheykh.” The general appellation of a lady is “the sitt,” which signifies “the mistress,” or “the lady.”

Before I describe the ordinary habits of the master of a family, I must mention the various classes of persons of whom the family may consist. The hāreem, or the females of the house, have distinct apartments allotted to them; and into these apartments (which, as well as the persons to whom they are appropriated, are called “the hāreem”) no males are allowed to enter, excepting the master of the family, and certain other near relations, and children. The hāreem may consist, first, of a wife, or wives (to the number of four); secondly, of female slaves, some of whom, namely, white and Abyssinian slaves, are generally concubines, and others (the black slaves) kept merely for servile offices, as cooking, waiting upon the ladies, &c.; thirdly, of female free servants, who are, in no case, concubines, or not legitimately so. The male dependants may consist of white and of black slaves, and free servants; but are mostly of the last-mentioned class. Very few of the Egyptians avail themselves of the licence, which their religion allows them, of having four wives; and still smaller is the number of those who have two or more wives, and concubines besides. Even most of those men who have but one wife are content, for the sake of domestic peace, if for no other reason, to remain without a concubine slave: but some prefer the possession of an Abyssinian slave to the more expensive maintenance of a wife; and keep a black slave-girl, or an Egyptian female servant, to wait upon her, to clean and keep in order the apartments of the hāreem, and to cook. It is seldom that two or more wives are kept in the same house: if they be, they generally have distinct apartments. Of male servants, the master of a family keeps, if he can afford to do so, one or more to wait upon him and his male guests; another, who is called a “sākka,” or water-carrier, but who is particularly a servant of the hāreem, and attends

the ladies when they go out;* a "bowwáb," or door-keeper, who constantly sits at the door of the house; and a "sáís," or groom, for the horse, mule, or ass. Few of the Egyptians have "memlooks," or male white slaves; most of these being in the possession of rich 'Osmánlees (or Turks); and scarcely any but Turks of high rank keep eunuchs: but a wealthy Egyptian merchant is proud of having a black slave to ride or walk behind him, and to carry his pipe.

The Egyptian is a very early riser; as he retires to sleep at an early hour; it is his duty to be up and dressed before daybreak, when he should say the morning-prayers. In general, while the master of a family is performing the religious ablution, and saying his prayers, his wife or slave is preparing for him a cup of coffee, and filling his pipe, which she presents to him as soon as he has acquitted himself of his religious duties.

Many of the Egyptians take nothing before noon but the cup of coffee and the pipe: others take a light meal at an early hour. The meal of breakfast ("el-fátoor") generally consists of bread, with eggs, butter, cheese, clouted cream, or curdled milk, &c.; or of a "fateereh," which is a kind of pastry, saturated with butter, made very thin, and folded over and over like a napkin: it is eaten alone, or with a little honey poured over it, or sugar. A very common dish for breakfast is "fool mudemmes," or beans, similar to our horse-beans, slowly boiled, during a whole night, in an earthen vessel, buried, all but the neck, in the hot ashes of an oven or a bath, and having the mouth closely stopped: they are eaten with linseed-oil, or butter, and generally with a little lime-juice; thus prepared, they are sold in the morning in the sooks (or markets) of Cairo and other towns. A meal is often made (by those who cannot afford luxuries) of bread and a mixture called "duḡḡah," which is commonly composed of salt and pepper, with "zaatar" (or wild marjoram) or mint or cumin-seed, and with one, or more, or all, of the following ingredients, namely, coriander-

* Unless there be a eunuch. The saḡḡa is generally the chief of the servants.

seed, cinnamon, sesame, and “*hommus*” (or chick-peas): each mouthful of bread is dipped in this mixture. The bread is always made in the form of a round flat cake, generally about a span in width, and a finger’s breadth in thickness.

The pipe and the cup of coffee are enjoyed by almost all persons who can afford such luxuries, very early in the morning, and oftentimes during the day. There are many men who are scarcely ever seen without a pipe either in their hand or carried behind them by a servant. The smoker keeps his tobacco for daily use in a purse or bag made of shawl-stuff, or silk, or velvet, which is often accompanied with a small pouch containing a flint and steel, and some agaric tinder, and is usually crammed into his bosom.

The pipe (which is called by many names, as “*shibuk*,”* “*ood*, &c.) is generally between four and five feet long: some pipes are shorter, and some are of greater length. The most common kind used in Egypt is made of a kind of wood called “*garmash’ak*.”† The greater part of the stick (from the mouth-piece to about three-quarters of its length) is covered with silk, which is confined at each extremity by gold thread, often intertwined with coloured silks, or by a tube of gilt silver; and at the lower extremity of the covering is a tassel of silk. The covering was originally designed to be moistened with water, in order to cool the pipe, and, consequently, the smoke, by evaporation: but this is only done when the pipe is old, or not handsome. Cherry-stick pipes, which are never covered, are also used by many persons, particularly in the winter. In summer, the smoke is not so cool from the cherry-stick pipe as from the kind before mentioned. The bowl‡ is of baked earth, coloured red or brown.§ The mouth-piece || is composed of two or more pieces of opaque, light-coloured amber, interjoined by ornaments of enamelled gold, agate, jasper, carnelion, or

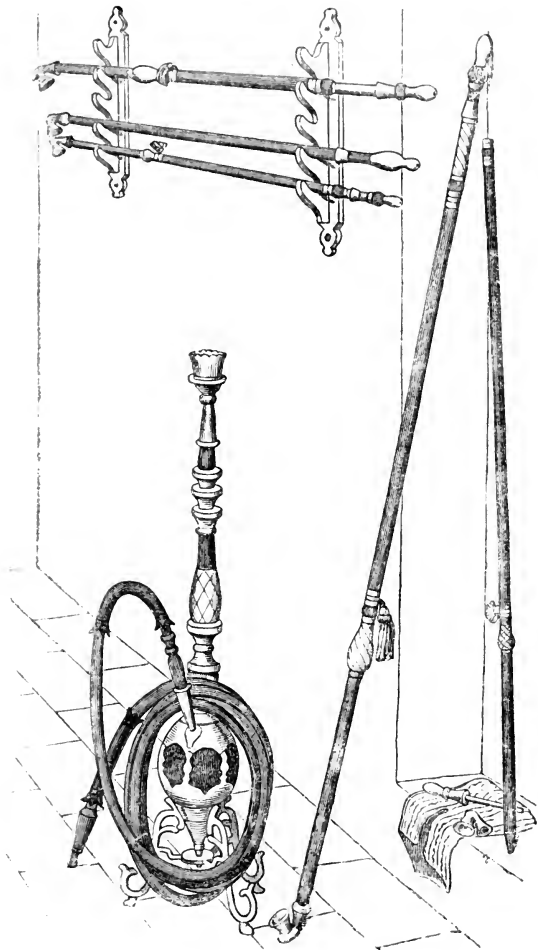
* From the Turkish “*chibook*.”

† I believe it is maple.

‡ “*Hagar*.”

§ To preserve the matting or carpet from injury, a small brass tray is often placed beneath the bowl; and a small tray of wood is made use of to receive the ashes of the tobacco.

|| “*Fum*,” or “*tarkeebeh*.”



Pipes.

some other precious substance. It is the most costly part of the pipe: the price of one of the kind most generally used by persons of the middle order is from about one to three pounds sterling. A wooden tube passes through it. This is often changed, as it soon becomes foul from the oil of the tobacco. The pipe also requires to be cleaned very often, which is done with tow, by means of a long wire. Many poor men in Cairo gain their livelihood by going about to clean pipes.

The tobacco smoked by persons of the higher orders, and some others, in Egypt, is of a very mild and delicious flavour. It is mostly from the neighbourhood of El-Ládikeyeh, in Syria. The best kind is the "mountain tobacco," * grown on the hills about that town. A stronger kind, which takes its name from the town of Şoor,† sometimes mixed with the former, is used by most persons of the middle orders. In smoking, the people of Egypt and of other countries of the East draw in their breath freely; so that much of the smoke descends into the lungs; and the terms which they use to express "smoking tobacco" signify "*drinking* smoke," or "*drinking* tobacco:" for the same word signifies both "smoke" and "tobacco." Few of them spit while smoking: I have very seldom seen any do so.

Some of the Egyptians use the Persian pipe, in which the smoke passes through water. The pipe of this kind most commonly used by persons of the higher classes is called "nárgeeleh," because the vessel that contains the water is a cocoa-nut, of which "nárgeeleh" is an Arabic name. Another kind, which has a glass vase, is called "sheesheh."‡ Each has a very long, flexible tube. A particular kind of tobacco, called "tumbák," from Persia, is used in the water-pipe: it is first washed several times, and put into the pipe-bowl while damp; and two or three pieces of live charcoal are placed on the top. Its flavour is mild, and very agreeable; but the strong inhalation necessary in this mode of smoking is injurious to persons

* "Dukhkhán gebelee."

† "Dukhkhán Şooree."

‡ A Persian word, signifying "glass."

of delicate lungs.* In using the Persian pipe, the person as freely draws the smoke into his lungs as he would inhale pure air. The great prevalence of liver-complaints in Arabia is attributed to the general use of the *nárgeeleh*; and many persons in Egypt suffer severely from the same cause. A kind of pipe commonly called "*gózeh*," which is similar to the *nárgeeleh*, excepting that it has a short cane tube, instead of the snake (or flexible one), and no stand, is used by men of the lowest class, for smoking both the *tumbák* and the intoxicating "*ḥasheesh*," or hemp.

The coffee ("*kahweh*" †) is made very strong, and without sugar or milk. The coffee-cup (which is called "*fingán*") is small; generally holding not quite an ounce and a half of liquid. It is of porcelain, or Dutch-ware, and, being without a handle, is placed within another cup (called "*zarf*"), of silver or brass, according to the circum-



Coffee-service.

stances of the owner, and both in shape and size nearly

* It is, however, often recommended in the case of a cough. One of my friends, the most celebrated of the poets of Cairo, who is much troubled by asthma, uses the *nárgeeleh* almost incessantly from morning till night.

† This is the name of the *beverage*; the *berries* (whether whole or pounded) are called "*bunn*."

resembling our egg-cup.* In preparing the coffee, the water is first made to boil: the coffee (freshly roasted, and pounded) is then put in, and stirred; after which the pot is again placed on the fire, once or twice, until the coffee begins to simmer; when it is taken off, and its contents are poured out into the cups while the surface is yet creamy. The Egyptians are excessively fond of pure and strong coffee, thus prepared; and very seldom add sugar to it (though some do so when they are unwell), and never milk or cream; but a little cardamom-seed † is often added to it. It is a common custom, also, to fumigate the cup with the smoke of mastic; and the wealthy sometimes impregnate the coffee with the delicious fragrance of ambergris.‡ The most general mode of doing this is, to put about a carat-weight of ambergris in a coffee-pot, and melt it over a fire; then make the coffee in another pot, in the manner before described, and, when it has settled a little, pour it into the pot which contains the ambergris. Some persons make use of the ambergris, for the same purpose, in a different way; sticking a piece of it, of the weight of about two carats, in the bottom of the cup, and then pouring in the coffee: a piece of the weight above mentioned will serve for two or three weeks. This mode is often adopted by persons who like always to have the coffee which they themselves drink flavoured with this perfume, and do not give all their visitors the same luxury. The coffee-pot is sometimes brought in a vessel of silver or brass (called “’áz’kēe” §), containing burning charcoal. This vessel is suspended by three chains.

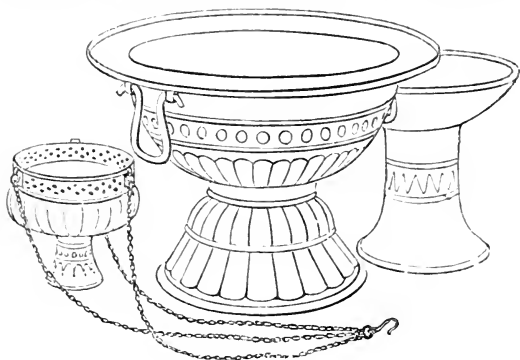
* In a full service there are ten *fiḡáns* and *zarfs* of uniform kinds, and often another *fiḡán* and *zarf* of a superior kind for the master of the house, or for a distinguished guest. In the accompanying sketch, the coffee-pot (“*bekreg*,” or “*bakrag*”) and the *zarfs* and tray are of silver, and are represented on a scale of one-eighth of the real size. Below this set are a similar *zarf* and *fiḡán*, on a scale of one-fourth, and a brass *zarf*, with the *fiḡán* placed in it. Some *zarfs* are of plain or gilt silver filigree; and a few opulent persons have them of gold. Many Muslims, however, religiously disallow all utensils of gold and of silver.

† “*Habb-hán*,”

‡ “*’Ambar*,”

§ Baron Hammer-Purgstall considers this word a corruption, and, writes “*chasseki*” in its stead: “’áz’kēe” (for “’ází’kēe”) is, however the term used by the Egyptians.

In presenting the coffee, the servant holds the foot of the zarf with his thumb and first finger. In receiving the



'A'z'kee and Mankals.*

ingán and zarf, he makes use of both hands, placing the left beneath and the right above at the same instant.

In cold weather, a brasier, or chafing-dish (called "mankal," and vulgarly "mankad"), of tinned copper, full of burning charcoal, is placed on the floor; and sometimes perfume is burnt in it. The Egyptians take great delight in perfumes; † and often fumigate their apartments. The substance most commonly used for this purpose is frankincense of an inferior quality, called "bakhloor el-barr." Benzoin ‡ and aloes-wood § are also used for the same purpose.

If he can conveniently afford to keep a horse, mule, or ass, or to hire an ass, the Egyptian is seldom seen walking far beyond the threshold of his own house; but very few of the people of Cairo, or of the other towns, venture

* One of the latter (that to the right) is an earthen vessel. Each of the above utensils is represented on a scale of about one eighth of the real size.

† They sometimes perfume the beard and mustaches with civet.

‡ "Gawce."

§ "Ood."

to expose themselves to the suspicion of possessing superfluous wealth, and, consequently, to greater exactions of the government than they would otherwise suffer, by keeping horses.* The modern saddle of the horse is generally padded, and covered with cloth or velvet, embroidered, or otherwise ornamented; and the head-stall and breast-leather are adorned with silk tassels, and coins, or other ornaments, of silver. Wealthy merchants, and the great 'ulama, usually ride mules. The saddle of the mule is, generally, nearly the same as that of the ass, of which a sketch is inserted: when the rider is one of the



An Ass equipped in the usual manner for riding.†

'ulama, it is covered with a "seggádeh" (or prayer-carpet): so, also, sometimes, is the ladies' saddle; from which, however, the former differs considerably, as will

* Whether walking or riding, a person of the higher class is usually attended by a servant bearing his pipe.

† Nearly the whole of its coat is closely shorn.

be shown hereafter. Asses are most generally used for riding through the narrow and crowded streets of Cairo; and there are many for hire: their usual pace is an easy amble. Egypt has long been famed for its excellent asses, which are, in general, larger than those of our country, and very superior to the latter in every respect. The usual price of one of a good breed and well trained is about three or four pounds sterling. The ass is furnished with a stuffed saddle; the forepart of which is covered with red leather, and the seat, most commonly, with a kind of soft woollen lace, similar to our coach-lace, of red, yellow, and other colours. The stirrup-leathers are, in every case, very short. The horseman is preceded by a servant, or by two servants, to clear the way; and, for the same purpose, a servant generally runs beside or behind the ass, or sometimes before; calling out to the passengers to move out of the way to the right or left, or to take care of their backs, faces, sides, feet, or heels.* The rider, however, must be vigilant, and not trust merely to his servant, or he may be thrown down by the wide load of a camel; which accident, indeed, is sometimes unavoidable in the more narrow and crowded streets. His pipe is generally carried by the servant; and filled and lighted if he dismount at a house or shop.

If he have no regular business to employ him, the Egyptian spends the greater part of the day in riding, paying visits, or making purchases; or in smoking and sipping coffee and chatting with a friend at home; or he

* "Yemeenak! shimálak!" (to thy right! to thy left!), "dahrak!" (thy back!), "wishishak!" (thy face!), "gembak!" (thy side!), "riglak!" (thy foot!), "kaābak!" (thy heel!), and, to a Turk, "sákín!" (take care!), are the most common cries. The following appellations are also often added:—"yá efendee!" (to a Turk), "yá sheykh!" (to an old or a middle-aged Muslim native), "yá sabee!" (to a young man), "yá weled!" or "yá ibnee!" (to a boy), "yá shereef!" (to a green turbaned descendant of the Prophet), "yá m'allim!" (to a native Christian, or a Jew), "yá khawágeh!" (to a Frank), "yá sitt!" (to a lady, or a female of the middle order), and "yá bint!" that is, "daughter," or "girl" (to a poor female). A woman of the lower class, however old she be, the servant must call "girl," or "daughter," or probably she will not move an inch out of the way. A little girl, or young woman, is often called "árooseh," or "bride;" and "häggeh," or "female pilgrim," is an appellation often given to women in the streets.

passes an hour or more in the morning enjoying the luxuries of a public bath. At noon, he has again to say prayers, if he fulfil the duties imposed on him by his religion: but, as I have remarked on a former occasion, there are comparatively few persons among the Egyptians who do not sometimes neglect these duties; and there are many who scarcely ever pray. Directly after midday (if he has not taken a late breakfast), he dines; then takes a pipe and a cup of coffee, and, in hot weather, usually indulges himself with a nap. Often he retires to recline in the harem; where a wife or female slave watches over his repose, or rubs the soles of his feet with her hands. On such occasions, and at other times when he wishes to enjoy privacy, every person who comes to pay him a visit is told, by the servant, that he is in the harem; and no friend expects him to be called thence, unless on very urgent business. From the time of the afternoon-prayers, until sunset (the next time of prayer), he generally enjoys, again, his pipe and a cup of coffee in the society of some one or more of his friends at home or abroad. Shortly after sunset he sups.

I must now describe the meals of dinner ("el-ghada") and supper ("el-'asha"), and the manner and etiquette of eating. The same remarks will apply to both these repasts, excepting that supper is always the principal meal. It is the general custom to cook in the afternoon, and what remains of the supper is eaten the next day for dinner, when there are no guests in the house. The master of a family generally dines and sups with his wife or wives and children; but there are many men, particularly of the higher classes, who are too proud to do this, or too much engaged in society to be able to do so, unless on some few occasions; and there are men even of the lowest class who scarcely ever eat with their wives or children. When a person is paying a visit to a friend, and the hour of dinner or supper arrives, it is incumbent on the master of the house to order the meal to be brought; and the same is generally considered necessary if the visitor be a stranger.

Every person, before he sits down to the table, or

rather to the tray, washes his hands,* and sometimes his mouth also, with soap and water; or, at least, has some water poured upon his right hand. A servant brings to him a basin and ewer (called “tisht” and “ibreeḳ”), of tinned copper or of brass.† The former of these has a cover pierced with holes, with a raised receptacle for



Tisht and Ibreeḳ.‡

the soap in the middle; and the water, being poured upon the hands, passes through this cover into the space below; so that when the basin is brought to a second person, the water with which the former one has washed is not seen. A napkin (“foṭṭah”) is given to each person.

A round tray (called “ṣeeneeyeh,” and “ṣáneeyeh”) of tinned copper, or sometimes of brass, generally between two and three feet in diameter, serves as a table, being placed upon a stool (“kursee”) about fifteen inches high, made of wood, and often covered with mother-of-

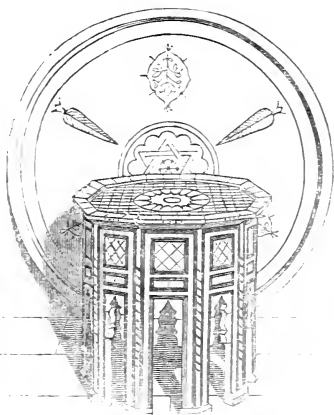
* See Mark, vii. 3.

† In the houses of some of the opulent, these utensils are of silver. I have also seen some of gilt copper.

‡ The width of the former is fourteen inches; and the height of the latter the same.



Washing before or after a Meal.



Kurse and Seeneeyeh.

pearl, tortoise-shell, bone, &c. These two pieces of furniture compose the "sufrah." Round cakes of bread, such as have been before described, sometimes cut in halves across the middle, are placed round the tray, with several limes, cut in two, to be squeezed over any of the dishes that may require the acid; and a spoon of box-wood, or of ebony, or tortoise-shell, is put for each person. The bread often serves as a plate. Several dishes of tinned copper, or of china, containing different kinds of viands, vegetables, &c., are then placed upon the tray, according to the common fashion of the country, or only one dish is put on at a time, after the Turkish mode.

The persons who are to partake of the repast sit upon the floor around the tray, each with his napkin upon his knees; or, if the tray be placed near the edge of a low *deewán*, which is often done, some of the persons may sit on the *deewán* and the others on the floor; but if the party be numerous, the tray is placed in the middle of the room, and they sit round it with one knee on the ground, and the other (the right) raised; and in this manner as many as twelve persons may sit round a tray three feet wide. Each person bares his right arm to the elbow, or tucks up the hanging end of his sleeve. Before he begins to eat he says "*Bi-smi-llah*" (In the name of God).^{*} This is generally said in a low but audible voice, and by the master of the house first. It is considered both as a grace and as an invitation to any person to partake of the meal; and when any one is addressed with "*Bi-smi-llah*," or "*Tafaddal*" (which latter signifies, in this case, "Do me the favour to partake of the repast"), he must reply, if he do not accept the invitation, "*Heneeän*" (or "May it be productive of enjoyment," or "benefit"), or use some similar expression; else it will be feared that an evil eye has been cast upon the food; and they say that, "in the food that is coveted" (or upon which an envious eye has fallen) "there is no blessing." But the manner in

^{*} Or "*Bi-smi-lláhi-r-rahmáni-r-raheem*" (In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful).



A Party at Dinner or Supper.*

which the Egyptian often presses a stranger to eat with him shows that feelings of hospitality most forcibly dictate the "Bi-smi-llah." The master of the house first begins to eat, the guests or others immediately follow his example. Neither knives nor forks are used; the thumb and two fingers of the right hand serve instead of those instruments, but the spoons are used for soup or rice or other things that cannot be easily taken without;

* One of the servants is holding a water-bottle; the other, a fly-whisk made of palm-leaves.

and both hands may be used in particular cases, as will be presently explained. When there are several dishes upon the tray, each person takes of any that he likes, or of every one in succession: when only one dish is placed upon the tray at a time, each takes from it a few mouthfuls, and it is quickly removed to give place to another.* To pick out a delicate morsel and hand it to a friend is esteemed polite. The manner of eating with the fingers, as practised in Egypt and other Eastern countries, is more delicate than may be imagined by Europeans who have not witnessed it, nor heard it correctly described. Each person breaks off a small piece of bread, dips it in the dish, and then conveys it to his mouth, together with a small portion of the meat or other contents of the dish.† The piece of bread is generally doubled together, so as to enclose the morsel of meat, &c.; and only the thumb and first and second fingers are commonly used. When a person takes a piece of meat too large for a single mouthful, he usually places it upon his bread.

The food is dressed in such a manner that it may be easily eaten in the mode above described. It generally consists, for the most part, of “yakhnee,” or stewed meat, with chopped onions, or with a quantity of “bá-miyehs,”‡ or other vegetables; “kâwurmeh,” or a richer stew, with onions; “warak mahshee,” or vine-leaves, or bits of lettuce-leaf or cabbage-leaf, with a mixture of rice and minced meat (delicately seasoned with salt, pepper, and onions, and often with garlic, parsley, &c.) wrapped up in them and boiled; cucumbers (“khiyár”), or black, white, or red “bádingáns,”§ or a kind of gourd (called “kara kooseh”) of the size and shape of

* Our Saviour and his disciples thus ate from one dish. See Matt. xxvi. 23.

† Or he merely sops his morsel of bread in the dish. See Ruth, ii. 14; and John, xiii. 26.

‡ The bá-miyeh is the esculent “hibiscus:” the part which is eaten is a polygonal pod, generally between one and three inches in length, and of the thickness of a small finger: it is full of seeds and nutritive mucilage, and has a very pleasant flavour. A little lime-juice is usually dropped on the plate of bá-miyehs.

§ The black and white bádingán are the fruits of two kinds of egg plant: the red is the tomato.

a small cucumber, which are all "maḥshee," or stuffed, with the same composition as the leaves above mentioned ; and "kebáb," or small morsels of mutton or lamb, roasted on skewers. Many dishes consist wholly, or for the most part, of vegetables ; such as cabbage, purslain, spinach, beans, lupins, chick-peas, gourd cut into small pieces, colocasia, lentils, &c. Fish, dressed with oil, is also a common dish. Most of the meats are cooked with clarified butter, on account of the deficiency of fat, and are made very rich ; the butter, in the hot season, is perfectly liquid. When a fowl is placed whole on the tray, both hands are generally required to separate the joints ; or two persons, each using the right hand alone, perform this operation together ; but some will do it very cleverly without assistance and with a single hand. Many of the Arabs will not allow the left hand to touch food in any case,* excepting when the right is maimed. A boned fowl, stuffed with raisins, pistachio-nuts, crumbled bread, and parsley, is not an uncommon dish, and even a whole lamb, stuffed with pistachio-nuts, &c., is sometimes served up, but the meat is easily separated with one hand. Sweets are often mixed with stewed meat, &c. ; as, for instance, "'annáb" (or jujubes), peaches, apricots, &c., and sugar, with yakhnee. Various kinds of sweets are also served up, and often in no particular order with respect to other meats. A favourite sweet dish is "kunáfeh," which is made of wheat-flour, and resembles vermicelli, but is finer ; it is fried with a little clarified butter, and sweetened with sugar or honey. A dish of water-melon ("baṭṭeekh"), if in season, generally forms part of the meal. This is cut up about a quarter of an hour before, and left to cool in the external air, or in a current of air, by the evaporation of the juice on the surfaces of the slices ; but it is always watched during this time, lest a serpent should come to it, and poison it by its breath or bite ; for this reptile is said to be extremely fond of the water-melon, and to smell it at a great distance. Water-melons are very abundant in Egypt, and mostly very delicious and wholesome. A

* Because used for unclean purposes.

dish of boiled rice (called “ruzz mufelfel,” the “piláv” of the Turks), mixed with a little butter, and seasoned with salt and pepper, is generally that from which the last morsels are taken; but, in the houses of the wealthy, this is often followed by a bowl of “khusháf,”* a sweet drink, commonly consisting of water with raisins boiled in it, and then sugar: when cool, a little rose-water is dropped into it.† The water-melon frequently supplies the place of this.‡

The Egyptians eat very moderately, though quickly. Each person, as soon as he has finished, says, “El-ḥamdu li-lláh” (Praise be to God),§ and gets up, without waiting till the others have done: || he then washes his hands and mouth with soap and water; the basin and ewer being held by a servant, as before.

The only beverage at meals is water of the Nile, or sometimes, at the tables of the rich, sherbet, which will presently be described. The Arabs drink little or no water *during* a meal, but generally take a large draught immediately *after*. The water of the Nile is remarkably good; but that of all the wells in Cairo, and in other parts of Egypt, is slightly brackish. In general, water is drunk either from an earthen bottle or from a brass cup.¶ The water-bottles are of two kinds; one called “dóraq,” and the other “kulleh:” the former has a narrow and the latter a wide mouth. They are made of a greyish, porous earth, which cools the water deliciously, by evaporation; and they are therefore generally placed in a current of air. The interior is often

* So called from the Persian “khósh áb,” or “sweet water.”

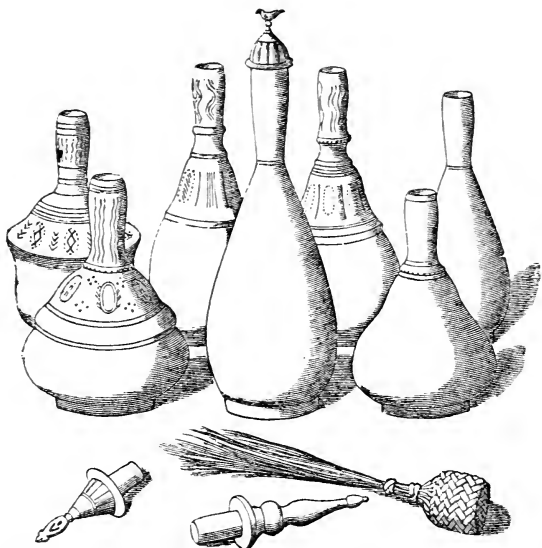
† It is drunk with ladles of tortoise-shell or cocoa-nut.

‡ The principal and best fruits of Egypt are dates, grapes, oranges, and citrons of various kinds, common figs, sycamore-figs, prickly pears, pomegranates, bananas, and a great variety of melons. From this enumeration it appears that there are not many good fruits in this country.

§ Or “El-ḥamdu li-lláhi rabbi-l-‘álameen” (Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures).

|| It is deemed highly improper to rise during a meal, even from respect to a superior who may approach. It has been mentioned before that the Prophet forbade his followers to rise while eating, or when about to eat, even if the time of prayer arrived.

¶ The ancient Egyptians used drinking-cups of brass. (Herodotus, lib. ii. cap. 37.)



Water-bottles (Döraqs), with covers of different kinds.—The bottles in the foremost row are one-sixth of the real size.



Water-bottles (Küllehs).

blackened with the smoke of some resinous wood, and then perfumed with the smoke of "kafal"* wood and mastic; the latter used last. A small earthen vessel (called "mibkhar'ah") is employed in performing these operations, to contain the burning charcoal, which is re-



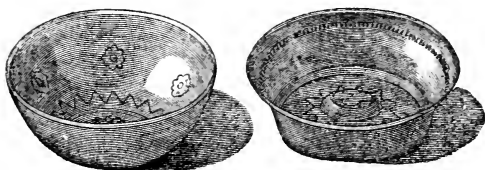
Earthen Mibkhar'ah and China Dóraḡ, one-sixth of the real size.

quired to ignite the wood and the mastic; and the water-bottle is held inverted over it. A strip of rag is tied round the neck of the dóraḡ, at the distance of about an inch from the mouth, to prevent the smoke-black from extending too far upon the exterior of the bottle. Many persons also put a little orange-flower-water† into the bottles. This gives a very agreeable flavour to their contents. The bottles have stoppers of silver, brass, tin, wood, or palm-leaves; and are generally placed in a tray of tinned copper, which receives the water that exudes from them. In cold weather, china bottles are used in many houses instead of those above described, which then render the water too cold.‡ The two most common forms of drinking-cups are here represented. Some of them

* "Amyris kafal" of Forskal. An Arabian tree.

† "Móyet zahr," or "móyet zahr náring."

‡ Baron Hammer-Purgstall has remarked that two other vessels should have been mentioned here (in the first edition of this work), more especially because their names have been adopted in European languages: they are the "garrah" or "jarrah," a water-jar or pitcher; and the "demigán" or "demiján," a large bottle, "la dame jeanette."



Brass drinking cups, one-fifth of the real size.

have texts of the Kur-án, &c., engraved in the interior, or the names of "the Seven Sleepers:" but inscriptions of the former kind I have seldom seen. Every person, before and after drinking, repeats the same ejaculations as before and after eating; and this he does each time that he drinks during a meal: each friend present then says to him, "May it be productive of enjoyment," or "benefit;"* to which the reply is, "God cause thee to have enjoyment."†

Though we read, in some of the delightful tales of 'The Thousand and One Nights,' of removing "the table of viands"‡ and bringing "the table of wine,"§ this prohibited beverage is not often introduced in general society, either during or after the meal, or at other times, by the Muslims of Egypt in the present day. Many of them, however, habitually indulge in drinking wine with select parties of their acquaintance. The servants of a man who is addicted to this habit know such of his friends as may be admitted, if they happen to call when he is engaged in this unlawful pleasure; and to all others they say that he is not at home, or that he is in the harem. Drinking wine is indulged in by such persons before and after supper, and during that meal; but it is most approved *before* supper, as they say that it quickens the appetite. The "table of wine" is usually thus prepared, according to a penitent Muslim wine-bibber, who is one of my friends (I cannot speak on this subject from my own experience, for, as I never drink wine, I have

* "Henecān." † "Allah yehenneek" (for "yuhenneek").

‡ "Sufrat et-ṭa'ām." § "Sufrat el-mudām."

never been invited to join a Muslim wine-party):—A round japanned tray, or a glass dish, is placed on the stool before mentioned: on this are generally arranged two cut-glass jugs, one containing wine,* and the other rosoglio;† and sometimes two or more bottles besides: several small glasses are placed with these; and glass saucers of dried and fresh fruits, and perhaps pickles: lastly, two candles, and often a bunch of flowers stuck in a candlestick, are put upon the tray.

The Egyptians have various kinds of sherbets, or sweet drinks. The most common kind‡ is merely sugar and water, but very sweet; lemonade§ is another; a third kind, the most esteemed,|| is prepared from a hard conserve of violets, made by pounding violet-flowers, and then boiling them with sugar: this violet-sherbet is of a green colour: a fourth kind¶ is prepared from mulberries; a fifth,** from sorrel. There is also a kind of sherbet sold in the streets.†† which is made with raisins, as its name implies; another kind, which is a strong infusion of licorice-root, and called by the name of that root;‡‡ and a third kind, which is prepared from the fruit of the locust-tree, and called, in like manner, by the name of the fruit.§§ The sherbet is served in covered glass cups, generally called “kullehs,” containing about three-quarters of a pint; some of which (the more common kind) are ornamented with gilt flowers, &c. The sherbet-cups are placed on a round tray, and covered with a round piece of embroidered silk, or cloth of gold. On the right arm of the person who presents the sherbet is hung a large oblong napkin with a wide embroidered border of gold and coloured silks at each end. This is ostensibly offered for the purpose of wiping the lips after drinking

* “Nebeed” (more properly, “nebeedh:” see note, page 130), or “mudám.”

† “’Amber’ee.”

‡ Called simply “sharbát,” or “sharbát sukkar,” or only “sukkar.”

§ “Leymoonáteh,” or “sharáb el-leymoon.”

|| “Sharáb el-benefseg.”

¶ “Sharáb et-toot.”

** “Sharáb el-hommejd.”

†† Called “zebeeb.” This name is also given to an intoxicating conserve.

‡‡ “’Erk soos.”

§§ “Kharroob.”

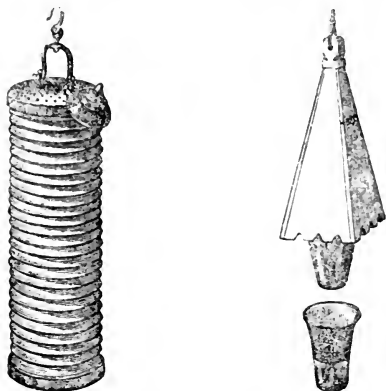


Sherbet-cups.

the sherbet; but it is really not so much for use as for display: the lips are seldom or scarcely touched with it.

The interval between supper and the “’eshë,” or time of the night-prayers, is generally passed in smoking a pipe and sipping a cup of coffee. The enjoyment of the pipe may be interrupted by prayer, but is continued afterwards; and sometimes draughts or chess, or some other game, or at least conversation, contributes to make the time glide away more agreeably. The members of an Egyptian family in easy circumstances may pass their time very pleasantly; but they do so in a quiet way. The men often pay evening visits to their friends, at or after supper-time. They commonly use, on these and similar occasions, a folding lantern (“fánoos”), composed of waxed cloth strained over rings of wire, and a top and bottom of tinned copper. This kind of lantern is here represented, together with the common lamp (“kandeel”), and its usual receptacle of wood, which serves to protect the flame from the wind. The lamp is a small vessel of glass, having a little tube in the bottom, in which is stuck a wick formed of cotton twisted round a piece of straw. Some water is poured in first, and then the oil. A lamp of this kind is often hung over the entrance of a house. By night the interiors of the houses present a more dull appearance than in the day: the light of one or two candles (placed on the floor or on

a stool, and sometimes surrounded by a large glass shade, or enclosed in a glass lantern, on account of the windows being merely of lattice-work) is generally thought suffi-



Lantern and Lamp.

cient for a large and lofty saloon. Few of the Egyptians sit up later, in summer, than three or four o'clock, which is three or four hours after sunset; for their reckoning of time is from sunset at every season of the year: in winter they often sit up five or six hours.

Thus the day is usually spent by men of moderate wealth who have no regular business to attend to, or none that requires their own active superintendence. But it is the habit of the *tradesman* to repair, soon after breakfast, to his shop or warehouse, and to remain there until near sunset.* He has leisure to smoke as much as he likes; and his customers often smoke with him. To some of these he offers his own pipe (unless they have theirs with them), and a cup of coffee, which is obtained

* A description of the shops, and a further account of the tradesmen of Cairo, will be given in Chapter XIV., on Industry.

from the nearest coffee-shop. A great portion of the day he sometimes passes in agreeable chat with customers, or with the tradesmen of the next or opposite shops. He generally says his prayers without moving from his shop. Shortly after the noon-prayers, or sometimes earlier or later, he eats a light meal, such as a plate of kebáb and a cake of bread (which a boy or maid daily brings from his house, or procures in the market), or some bread and cheese or pickles, &c., which are carried about the streets for sale; and if a customer be present, he is always invited, and often pressed, to partake of this meal. A large earthen bottle of water is kept in the shop, and replenished, whenever necessary, by a passing "saḵḵa," or water-carrier. In the evening the tradesman returns to his house, eats his supper, and soon after retires to bed.

It is the general custom in Egypt for the husband and wife to sleep in the same bed, excepting among the wealthy classes, who mostly prefer separate beds. The bed is usually thus prepared in the houses of persons of moderate wealth: a mattress,* stuffed with cotton, about six feet long, and three or four feet in width, is placed upon a low frame;† a pillow is placed for the head, and a sheet spread over this and the mattress; the only covering in summer is generally a thin blanket,‡ and in winter a thick quilt,§ stuffed with cotton. If there be no frame the mattress is placed upon the floor, or two mattresses are laid one upon the other, with the sheet, pillow, &c., and often a cushion of the deewán is placed on each side. A musquito-curtain|| is suspended over the bed by means of four strings, which are attached to nails in the wall. The dress is seldom changed on going to bed; and in winter many people sleep with all their ordinary clothes on, excepting the gibbeh, or cloth coat; but in summer they sleep almost, or entirely, unclad. In winter the bed is prepared in a small closet (called "khazneh"); in summer, in a large room. All the

* "Tarráḥah." † "Sereer." ‡ "Herám." § "Leḥáf."

|| "Námooseeyeh." It is composed of muslin, or linen of an open texture, or crape, and forms a close canopy.

bed-clothes are rolled up in the day-time, and placed on one side, or in the closet above mentioned. During the hottest weather many people sleep upon the house-top, or in a "fes-ḥah" (or "fesahah"), which is an uncovered apartment; but ophthalmia and other diseases often result from their thus exposing themselves to the external air at night. The most common kind of frame for the bed is made of palm-sticks; but this harbours bugs, which are very abundant in Egypt in the summer, as fleas are in the winter. These and other plagues to which the people of Egypt are exposed by night and day have been before mentioned.* With regard to the most disgusting of them, the lice, it may here be added, that, though they are not always to be avoided even by the most scrupulous cleanliness, a person who changes his linen after two or three days' wear is very seldom annoyed by these vermin; and when he is they are easily removed, not attaching themselves to the skin; they are generally found in the linen. A house may be kept almost clear of fleas by frequent washing and sweeping; and the flies may be kept out by placing nets at the doors and windows; but it is impossible to purify an Egyptian house from bugs if it contain much wood-work, which is generally the case.

The male servants† lead a very easy life, with the exception of the "sāis," or groom, who, whenever his master takes a ride, runs before or beside him; and this he will do in the hottest weather for hours together without appearing fatigued. Almost every wealthy person in Cairo has a "bowwáb," or doorkeeper, always at the door of his house, and several other male servants. Most of these are natives of Egypt; but many Nubians are also employed as servants in Cairo and other Egyptian towns. The latter are mostly bowwábs, and are generally esteemed more honest than the Egyptian servants; but I am inclined to think, from the opinion of several of my friends, and from my own experience, that they

* In the Introduction to this work.

† "Khaddámeen," singular "kháddám."

have acquired this reputation only by superior cunning. The wages of the male servants are very small, usually from one to two dollars (or from four to eight shillings) per month ; but they receive many presents.* On the “’eed” (or festival) after Ramadán the master generally gives to each of his servants part or the whole of a new suit of clothes, consisting of an “’eree” (a blue shirt, which is their outer dress), a “tarboosh,” and a turban. Other articles of dress which they require during the year (excepting, sometimes, shoes) the servants are obliged to provide for themselves. Besides what their master gives them, they also receive small presents of money from his visitors, and from the tradespeople with whom he deals ; particularly whenever he has made any considerable purchase. They sleep in the clothes which they wear during the day, each upon a small mat ; and in winter they cover themselves with a cloak † or blanket. In some respects they are often familiar in their manners to their master, even laughing and joking with him ; in others they are very submissive, paying him the utmost honour, and bearing corporal chastisement from his hand with child-like patience.

The male black slave ‡ is treated with more consideration than the free servant ; and leads a life well suited to his lazy disposition. If discontented with his situation he can legally compel his master to sell him. Many of the slaves in Egypt wear the Turkish military dress. They are generally the greatest fanatics in the East ; and more accustomed than any other class to insult the Christians and every people who are not of the faith which they have themselves adopted, without knowing

* “The habit of irregular remuneration, in lieu of fixed, invariable, and *actionable* wages, produces a difference of mental habits, as regards servants and masters, that I am sure is not to be understood through description ; and yet every day you see Europeans, those men who affect such comprehensive views and such powers of logic, reviling the habit of giving presents, not perceiving that this practice leads to the preservation of those interesting domestic relations which I conceive to be the greatest lesson, political and moral, that is presented to us by the Eastern world.”—Urquhart’s ‘Spirit of the East,’ vol. ii. p. 402.

† See Exodus, xxii. 26, 27.

‡ Called “’abd.”

more of its doctrines than Arab children who have been but a week at school. Of the female slaves, some account will be given in the next Chapter.

An acquaintance with the modern inhabitants of Egypt leads us often to compare their domestic habits with those of Europeans in the middle ages ; and, perhaps, in this comparison, the points of resemblance which we observe, with regard to the men, are more striking than the contrasts ; but the reverse will be found to be the case when we consider the state of the females.

CHAPTER VI.

DOMESTIC LIFE—*continued.*

QUITTING the lower apartments, where we have been long detained, I must enter upon a more presumptuous office than I have yet undertaken, which is that of a guide to the “Hareem :” * but first I must give some account of marriage and the marriage-ceremonies.

To abstain from marrying when a man has attained a sufficient age, and when there is no just impediment, is esteemed, by the Egyptians, improper, and even disreputable. For being myself guilty of this fault (to use no harsher term), I have suffered much inconvenience and discomfort during my stay in this country, and endured many reproaches. During my former visit to Egypt, having occasion to remove from a house which I had occupied for some months in a great thoroughfare-street in Cairo, I engaged another house in a neighbouring quarter : the lease was written, and some money paid in advance ; but a day or two after, the agent of the owner came to inform me that the inhabitants of the quarter, who were mostly “shereefs” (or descendants of the Prophet), objected to my living among them because I was not married. He added, however, that they would gladly admit me if I would even purchase a female slave, which would exempt me from the opprobrium cast upon me by the want of a wife. I replied that, being merely a sojourner in Egypt, I did not like to take either a wife or female slave, whom I must soon abandon : the money

* The term “hareem” (which, as before mentioned, is applied both to the females of a family and to the apartments which they occupy) signifies *prohibited, sacred*, &c. The Turks, and many of the Arabs, use the synonymous Arabic term “haram,” which the former pronounce “hareem.”

that I had paid was, therefore, returned to me. In another quarter I was less unfortunate; such heavy objections on account of my being unmarried were not raised: I was only required to promise that no persons wearing hats should come into the quarter to visit me; yet, after I had established myself in my new residence, the sheykh (or chief) of the quarter often endeavoured to persuade me to marry. All my arguments against doing so he deemed of no weight. "You tell me," said he, "that in a year or two you mean to leave this country: now, there is a young widow, who, I am told, is handsome, living within a few doors of you, who will be glad to become your wife, even with the express understanding that you shall divorce her when you quit this place; though, of course, you may do so before, if she should not please you." This young damsel had several times contrived to let me catch a glimpse of a pretty face as I passed the house in which she and her parents lived. What answer could I return? I replied, that I had actually, by accident, seen her face, and that she was the last woman I should wish to marry under such circumstances; for I was sure that I could never make up my mind to part with her. But I found it rather difficult to silence my officious friend. It has been mentioned before, in the Introduction, that an unmarried man, or one who has not a female slave, is usually obliged to dwell in a *wekâleh*, unless he have some near relation with whom to reside; but that Franks are now exempted from this restriction.

The Egyptian females arrive at puberty much earlier than the natives of colder climates. Many marry at the age of twelve or thirteen years; and some remarkably precocious girls are married at the age of *ten*.* but such occurrences are not common. Few remain unmarried after sixteen years of age. An Egyptian girl at the age of thirteen, or even earlier, may be a mother. The women of Egypt are generally very prolific; but females of other countries residing here are often childless; and the children of foreigners, born in Egypt, seldom live to

* They are often betrothed two or three or more years earlier.

a mature age, even when the mother is a native. It was on this account that the emancipated Memlooks (or military slaves) usually adopted Memlooks.

It is very common among the Arabs of Egypt and of other countries, but less so in Cairo than in other parts of Egypt, for a man to marry his first cousin. In this case the husband and wife continue to call each other "cousin;" because the tie of blood is indissoluble; but that of matrimony very precarious. A union of this kind is generally lasting, on account of this tie of blood; and because mutual intercourse may have formed an attachment between the parties in tender age; though, if they be of the higher or middle classes, the young man is seldom allowed to see the face of his female cousin, or even to meet and converse with her, after she has arrived at or near the age of puberty, until she has become his wife.

Marriages in Cairo are generally conducted, in the case of a virgin, in the following manner; but in that of a widow, or a divorced woman, with little ceremony. Most commonly, the mother or some other near female relation of the youth or man who is desirous of obtaining a wife describes to him the personal and other qualifications of the young women with whom she is acquainted, and directs his choice: * or he employs a "khát'beh," or "khátibeh;" a woman whose regular business it is to assist men in such cases. Sometimes two or more women of this profession are employed. A khát'beh gives her report confidentially, describing one girl as being like a gazelle, pretty, and elegant, and young; and another, as not pretty, but rich, and so forth. If the man have a mother and other near female relations, two or three of these usually go with a khát'beh to pay visits to several hareems, to which she has access in her professional character of a match-maker; for she is employed as much by the women as by the men. She sometimes also exercises the trade of a "delláleh" (or broker) for the sale of

* Abraham's sending a messenger to his own country to seek a wife for his son Isaac (see Genesis, xxiv.) was just such a measure as most modern Arabs would adopt under similar circumstances, if easily practicable.

ornaments, clothing, &c., which procures her admission into almost every hareem. The women who accompany her in search of a wife for their relation are introduced to the different hareems merely as ordinary visitors ; and as such, if disappointed, they soon take their leave, though the object of their visit is of course understood by the other party : but if they find among the females of a family (and they are sure to see all who are marriageable) a girl or young woman having the necessary personal qualifications, they state the motive of their visit, and ask, if the proposed match be not at once disapproved of, what property, ornaments, &c., the object of their wishes may possess. If the father of the intended bride be dead, she may perhaps possess one or more houses, shops, &c. ; and in almost every case a marriageable girl of the middle or higher ranks has a set of ornaments of gold and jewels. The women-visitors, having asked these and other questions, bring their report to the expectant youth or man. If satisfied with their report he gives a present to the *khât'beh*, and sends her again to the family of his intended wife to make known to them his wishes. She generally gives an exaggerated description of his personal attractions, wealth, &c. For instance, she will say of a very ordinary young man, of scarcely any property, and of whose disposition she knows nothing, "My daughter, the youth who wishes to marry you is young, graceful, elegant, beardless, has plenty of money, dresses handsomely, is fond of delicacies, but cannot enjoy his luxuries alone ; he wants you as his companion ; he will give you everything that money can procure ; he is a stayer-at-home, and will spend his whole time with you, caressing and fondling you."

The parents may betroth their daughter to whom they please, and marry her to him without her consent if she be not arrived at the age of puberty ; but after she has attained that age she may choose a husband for herself, and appoint any man to arrange and effect her marriage. In the former case, however, the *khât'beh* and the relations of a girl sought in marriage usually endeavour to obtain her consent to the proposed union. Very often,

a father objects to giving a daughter in marriage to a man who is not of the same profession or trade as himself; and to marrying a younger daughter before an elder.* The bridegroom can scarcely ever obtain even a surreptitious glance at the features of his bride until he finds her in his absolute possession, unless she belong to the lower classes of society; in which case it is easy enough for him to see her face.

When a female is about to marry she should have a "wekeel" (or deputy) to settle the compact and conclude the contract for her with her proposed husband. If she be under the age of puberty this is absolutely necessary; and in this case her father, if living, or (if he be dead) her nearest adult male relation, or a guardian appointed by will, or by the Kádee, performs the office of wekeel: but if she be of age she appoints her own wekeel, or may even make the contract herself; though this is seldom done.

After a youth or man has made choice of a female to demand in marriage, on the report of his female relations, or that of the khát'beh, and, by proxy, made the preliminary arrangements before described with her and her relations in the hareem, he repairs with two or three of his friends to her wekeel. Having obtained the wekeel's consent to the union, if the intended bride be under age, he asks what is the amount of the required "mahr" (or dowry).

The giving of a dowry is indispensable, as I have mentioned in a former Chapter. It is generally calculated in "riyáls," of ninety faddahs (now equivalent to five pence and two fifths) each. The riyál is an imaginary money, not a coin. The usual amount of the dowry, if the parties be in possession of a moderately good income, is about a thousand riyáls (or twenty-two pounds ten shillings); or, sometimes, not more than half that sum. The wealthy calculate the dowry in purses of five hundred piasters (now, five pounds sterling) each, and fix its amount at ten purses or more. It must be borne in mind that we are considering the case of a virgin-bride; the dowry of

* See Genesis, xxix. 26.

a widow or a divorced woman is much less. In settling the amount of the dowry, as in other pecuniary transactions, a little haggling frequently takes place: if a thousand riyals be demanded through the wekeel, the party of the intended bridegroom will probably make an offer of six hundred: the former party then gradually lowering the demand, and the other increasing the offer, they at length agree to fix it at eight hundred. It is generally stipulated that two-thirds of the dowry shall be paid immediately before the marriage contract is made; and the remaining third held in reserve, to be paid to the wife in case of divorcing her against her own consent, or in case of the husband's death.

This affair being settled, and confirmed by all persons present reciting the opening chapter of the Kur-án (the Fát'hah), an early day (perhaps the day next following) is appointed for paying the money, and performing the ceremony of the marriage contract, which is properly called " 'aḳd ennikáh."* The making this contract is commonly called "ketb el-kitáb" (or the writing of the writ); but it is very seldom the case that any document is written to confirm the marriage, unless the bridegroom is about to travel to another place, and fears that he may have occasion to prove his marriage where witnesses of the contract cannot be procured. Sometimes the marriage contract is concluded immediately after the arrangement respecting the dowry, but more generally a day or two after. On the day appointed for this ceremony the bridegroom, again accompanied by two or three of his friends, goes to the house of the bride, usually about noon, taking with him that portion of the dowry which he has promised to pay on this occasion. He and his companions are received by the bride's wekeel, and two or more friends of the latter are usually present. It is necessary that there be two witnesses (and those must be Muslims) to the marriage-contract, unless in a situation

* It is a common belief in Egypt, that, if any one make a marriage-contract in the month of Moharram, the marriage will be unhappy, and soon dissolved: wherefore, few persons do so. The most propitious period is the month of Showwál.

where witnesses cannot be procured. All persons present recite the Fát'hah; and the bridegroom then pays the money. After this, the marriage contract is performed. It is very simple. The bridegroom and the bride's wekeel sit upon the ground, face to face, with one knee upon the ground, and grasp each other's right hand, raising the thumbs, and pressing them against each other. A fikee* is generally employed to instruct them what they are to say. Having placed a handkerchief over their joined hands, he usually prefaces the words of the contract with a "khuṭbeh," consisting of a few words of exhortation and prayer, with quotations from the Kūr-án and Traditions, on the excellency and advantages of marriage. He then desires the bride's wekeel to say, "I betroth [or marry], to thee, my daughter [or the female who has appointed me her wekeel], such a one [naming the bride], the virgin † [or the adult virgin], for a dowry of such an amount." (The words "for a dowry," &c., are sometimes omitted.) The bride's wekeel having said this, the bridegroom, prompted in the same manner by the fikee, says, "I accept from thee her betrothal [or marriage] to myself, and take her under my care, and bind myself to afford her my protection; and ye who are present bear witness of this." The wekeel addresses the bridegroom in the same manner a second and a third time; and each time, the latter replies as before. They then generally add, "And blessing be on the Apostles, and praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures: amen:" after which, all present again repeat the Fát'hah. It is not always the same form of "khuṭbeh" that is recited on these occasions: any form may be used; and it may be repeated by any person: it is not even necessary; and is often altogether omitted. The contract concluded, the bridegroom sometimes (but seldom unless he be a person of the lower orders) kisses the hands of his friends and others there present; and they are presented with

* This appellation is commonly given to a schoolmaster. See a note in page 90.

† If the bride be not a virgin, a word importing this is substituted; namely, "seyyib," or, more properly, "theyyib."

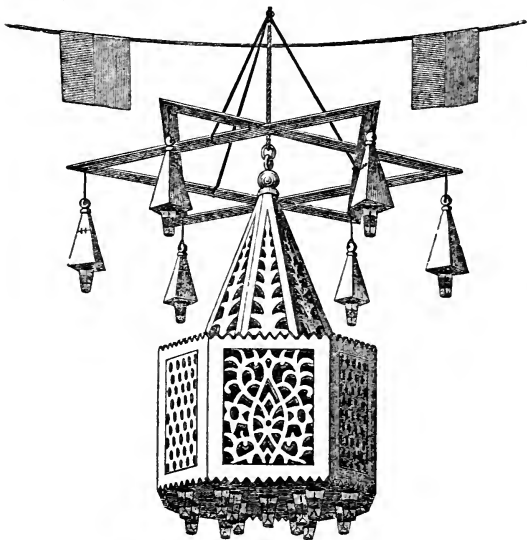
sherbet, and generally remain to dinner. Each of them receives an embroidered handkerchief, provided by the family of the bride; excepting the fikee, who receives a similar handkerchief, with a small gold coin tied up in it, from the bridegroom. Before the persons assembled on this occasion disperse, they settle when the "leylet ed-dukhleh" is to be: this is the night when the bride is brought to the house of the bridegroom, and the latter, for the first time, visits her.

In general, the bridegroom waits for his bride about eight or ten days after the conclusion of the contract. Meanwhile, he sends to her, two or three or more times, some fruit, sweetmeats, &c.; and perhaps makes her a present of a shawl, or some other article of value. The bride's family are at the same time occupied in preparing for her a stock of household furniture (as deewáns, matting, carpets, bedding, kitchen utensils, &c.) and dress. The portion of the dowry which has been paid by the bridegroom, and generally a much larger sum (the additional money, which is often more than the dowry itself, being supplied by the bride's family), is expended in purchasing the articles of furniture, dress, and ornaments for the bride. These articles, which are called "gaház," are the property of the bride; and if she be divorced, she takes them away with her. She cannot, therefore, with truth be said to be *purchased*.* The furniture is sent, commonly borne by a train of camels, to the bridegroom's house. Often, among the articles of the gaház is a chair for the turban or head-dress,† alluded to in a former page. It is of a large size, but slight make; the bottom and back generally of cane-work; sometimes with a canopy. It is never used to sit upon. The turban, when placed upon it, is covered with a kerchief of thick silk stuff, usually ornamented with gold thread. There are sometimes sent two of these chairs; one for the husband, and the other for the wife.

* Among the peasants, however, the father, or other lawful guardian of the bride, receives the dowry, and gives nothing in return but the girl, and sometimes a little corn, &c. The bridegroom, in this case, supplies everything, even the dress of the bride.

† "Kursee el-'emámeh."

The bridegroom should receive his bride on the eve of Friday, or that of Monday ;* but the former is generally esteemed the more fortunate period. Let us say, for instance, that the bride is to be conducted to him on the



Lantern, &c., suspended on the occasion of a Wedding.

eve of Friday. During two or three or more preceding

* Burckhardt has erred in stating that *Monday* and Thursday are the days on which the ceremonies *immediately previous* to the marriage night are performed : he should have said *Sunday* and Thursday. He has also fallen into some other errors in the account which he has given of the marriage ceremonies of the Egyptians, in the illustrations of his 'Arabic Proverbs' (pp. 112—118). To mention this I feel to be a duty to myself, but one which I perform with reluctance, and not without the fear that Burckhardt's just reputation for general accuracy may make my reader think that he is right in these cases, and that I am wrong. I write these words in Cairo, with his book before me, and after sufficient experience and inquiries.

nights, the street or quarter in which the bridegroom lives is illuminated with chandeliers and lanterns, or with lanterns and small lamps, some suspended from cords drawn across from the bridegroom's and several other houses on each side to the houses opposite; and several small silk flags, each of two colours, generally red and green, are attached to these or other cords.* An entertainment is also given on each of these nights, particularly on the *last* night before that on which the wedding is concluded, at the bridegroom's house. On these occasions it is customary for the persons invited, and for all intimate friends, to send presents to his house, a day or two before the feast which they purpose or expect to attend: they generally send sugar, coffee, rice, wax-candles, or a lamb: the former articles are usually placed upon a tray of copper or wood, and covered with a silk or embroidered kerchief. The guests are entertained on these occasions by musicians and male or female singers, by dancing girls, or by the performance of a "khatmeh" or a "zikh."†

In the houses of the wealthy, the *khát'beh* or *khat'behs*, together with the "*dáyeh*" (or midwife) of the family, the "*belláneh*" (or female attendant of the bath), and the nurse of the bride, are each presented, a day or two after the conclusion of the contract, with a piece of gold stuff, a Kashmeer shawl, or a piece of striped silk, such as *yeleks* and *shintiyáns* are made of; and, placing these over the left shoulder, and attaching the edges together on the right side, go upon asses, with two or more men before them beating kettle-drums or tabours, to the houses of all the friends of the bride, to

* The lantern here represented, which is constructed of wood, and painted green, red, white, and blue, is called "*tureiya*" (the Arabic name of the Pleiades), and, together with the frame above, from which six lamps are suspended, and which is termed "*khátim Suleymán*" (or Solomon's seal), composes what is called a "*heml kanádeel*."

† These entertainments I do not here particularly describe, as it is my intention to devote the whole of a subsequent Chapter to the subject of private festivities. The "*khatmeh*" is the recitation of the whole of the *Kur-án*; and the "*zikh*," the repetition of the name of God, or of the profession of his unity, &c.: I shall have occasion to speak of both more fully in another Chapter on the periodical public festivals.

invite the females to accompany her to and from the bath, and to partake of an entertainment given on that occasion. At every house where they call they are treated with a repast, having sent notice the day before of their intended visit. They are called "mudnát."* I have sometimes seen them walking, and without the drums before them; but making up for the want of these instruments by shrill, quavering cries of joy, called "zagháreet."†

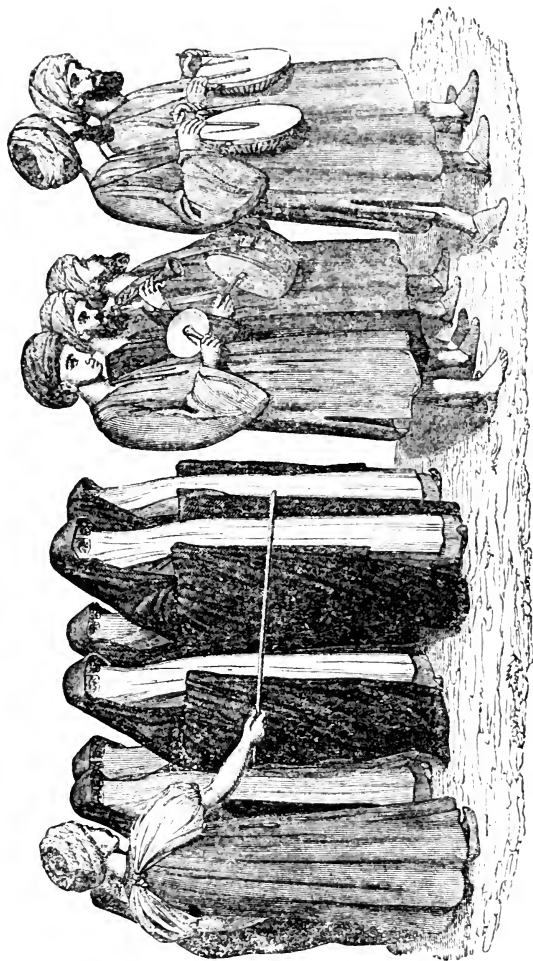
On the preceding Wednesday (or on the Saturday if the wedding be to conclude on the eve of Monday), at about the hour of noon, or a little later, the bride goes in state to the bath.‡ The procession to the bath is called "Zeffet el-Hammám." It is headed by a party of musicians with a hautboy, or two, and drums of different kinds.§ Frequently, as I have mentioned in a former Chapter, some person avails himself of this opportunity to parade his young son previously to circumcision: the child and his attendants, in this case, follow next after the musicians, in the manner already described. Sometimes, at the head of the bride's party are two men who carry the utensils and linen used in the bath, upon two round trays, each of which is covered with an embroidered or a plain silk kerchief: also, a saḡḡa, who gives water to any of the passengers, if asked; and two other persons, one of whom bears a "ḡumḡum," or bottle, of plain or gilt silver, or of china, containing rose-water or orange-flower-water, which he occasionally sprinkles on the passengers; and the other, a "mib-khar'ah" (or perfuming-vessel) of silver, with aloes-wood, or some other odoriferous substance, burning in

* "From the verb "adna," "he brought," &c.

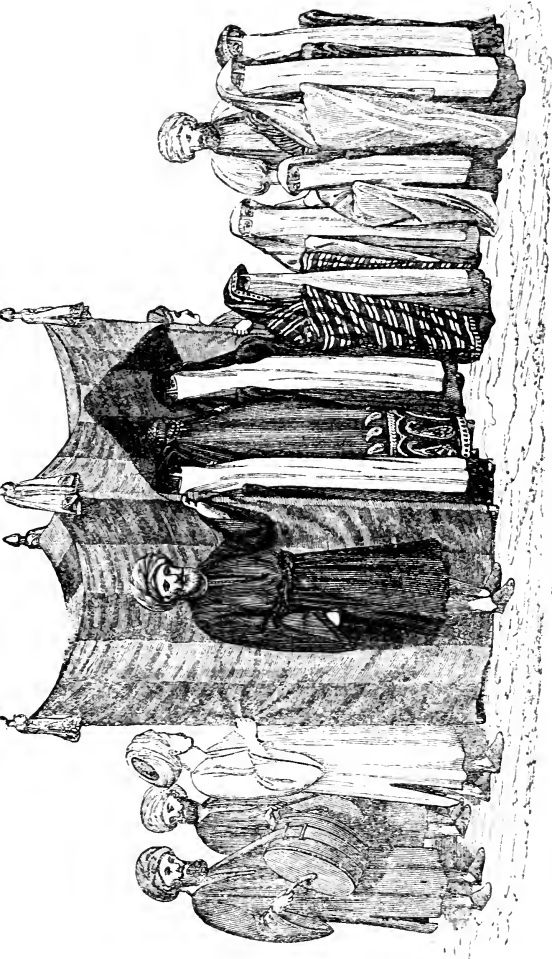
† These cries of the women, which are heard on various occasions of rejoicing in Egypt and other Eastern countries, are produced by a sharp utterance of the voice, accompanied by a quick, tremulous motion of the tongue.

‡ I have once seen this "zeffeh," or procession, and a second which will be described hereafter, go forth much later, and return an hour after sunset.

§ The music is generally of a very rude kind, and the airs usually played are those of popular songs, specimens of which will be found in this work.



Bridal Procession (Part I.).



Bridal Procession (Part II.)

it: but it is seldom that the procession is thus attended. In general, the first persons among the bride's party are several of her married female relations and friends, walking in pairs; and next, a number of young virgins. The former are dressed in the usual manner, covered with the black silk *habarah*: the latter have white silk *habarahs* or shawls. Then follows the bride, walking under a canopy of silk, of some gay colour, as pink, rose-colour, or yellow, or of two colours composing wide stripes, often rose-colour and yellow. It is carried by four men, by means of a pole at each corner, and is open only in front; and at the top of each of the four poles is attached an embroidered handkerchief. The dress of the bride, during this procession, entirely conceals her person. She is generally covered, from head to foot, with a red Kashmeer shawl, or with a white or yellow shawl, though rarely. Upon her head is placed a small pasteboard cap or crown. The shawl is placed over this, and conceals from the view of the public the richer articles of her dress, her face, and her jewels, &c., excepting one or two "*kussahs*"* (and sometimes other ornaments), generally of diamonds and emeralds, attached to that part of the shawl which covers her forehead. She is accompanied by two or three of her female relations within the canopy; and often, when in hot weather, a woman, walking backwards before her, is constantly employed in fanning her, with a large fan of black ostrich feathers, the lower part of the front of which is usually ornamented with a piece of looking-glass. Sometimes one *zeffeh*, with a single canopy, serves for two brides, who walk side by side. The procession moves very slowly, and generally pursues a circuitous route, for the sake of greater display. On leaving the house it turns to the right. It is closed by a second party of musicians, similar to the first, or by two or three drummers.

In the bridal processions of the lower orders, which are often conducted in the same manner as that above

* For a description of these ornaments, see the Appendix.

described, the women of the party frequently utter, at intervals, those shrill cries of joy called *zagháreeť*, which I have before had occasion to mention; and females of the poorer classes, when merely spectators of a *zeffeh*, often do the same.

The whole bath is sometimes hired for the bride and her party exclusively. They pass several hours, or seldom less than two, occupied in washing, sporting, and feasting; and frequently "*'A'l'mehs*" (or female singers) are hired to amuse them in the bath: they then return in the same order in which they came. The expense of the *zeffeh* falls on the relations of the bride; but the feast is supplied by the bridegroom.

Having returned from the bath to the house of her family, the bride and her companions sup together. If '*A'l'mehs* have contributed to the festivity in the bath, they also return with the bride to renew their concert. Their songs are always on the subject of love, and of the joyous event which occasions their presence. After the company have been thus entertained, a large quantity of *henna* having been prepared, mixed into a paste, the bride takes a lump of it in her hand, and receives contributions (called "*nuķoot*") from her guests: each of them sticks a coin (usually of gold) in the *henna* which she holds upon her hand; and when the lump is closely stuck with these coins, she scrapes it off her hand upon the edge of a basin of water. Having collected in this manner from all her guests, some more *henna* is applied to her hands and feet, which are then bound with pieces of linen; and in this state they remain until the next morning, when they are found to be sufficiently dyed with its deep orange-red tint. Her guests make use of the remainder of the dye for their own hands. This night is called "*Leylet el-Henna*," or "the Night of the *Henna*."

It is on this night, and sometimes also during the latter half of the preceding day, that the bridegroom gives his chief entertainment. "*Mohabbazeen*" (or low farce-players) often perform on this occasion before the house, or, if it be large enough, in the court. The other

and more common performances by which the guests are amused have been before mentioned.

On the following day the bride goes in procession to the house of the bridegroom. The procession before described is called "the Zeffieh of the Bath," to distinguish it from this, which is the more important, and which is therefore particularly called "Zeffiet el-'Arooseh," or "the Zeffieh of the Bride." In some cases, to diminish the expenses of the marriage-ceremonies, the bride is conducted privately to the bath, and only honoured with a zeffieh to the bridegroom's house. This procession is exactly similar to the former. The bride and her party, after breakfasting together, generally set out a little after midday. They proceed in the same order, and at the same slow pace, as in the zeffieh of the bath; and, if the house of the bridegroom be near, they follow a circuitous route through several principal streets for the sake of display. The ceremony usually occupies three or more hours.

Sometimes, before bridal processions of this kind, two swordsmen, clad in nothing but their drawers, engage each other in a mock combat; or two peasants cudgel each other with nebbots, or long staves. In the procession of a bride of a wealthy family, any person who has the art of performing some extraordinary feat to amuse the spectators is almost sure of being a welcome assistant, and of receiving a handsome present.* When the seyyid 'Omar, the Na'keeb el-Ashráf (or chief of the descendants of the Prophet), who was the main instrument of advancing Mo'hammad 'Alee to the dignity of Básha of Egypt, married a daughter, about twenty-

* One of the most common of the feats witnessed on such an occasion is the performance of a laborious task by a water-carrier, termed a "ķeyim," who, for the sake of a present, and this empty title, carries a water-skin filled with sand and water, of greater weight, and for a longer period, than any of his brethren will venture to do; and this he must accomplish without ever sitting down, except in a crouching position, to rest. In the case of a bridal procession which I lately witnessed, the ķeyim began to carry his burden, a skin of sand and water weighing about two hundred pounds, at sunset of the preceding day; bore it the whole night, and the ensuing day, before and during the procession, and continued to do so till sunset.

seven years since, there walked before the procession a young man who had made an incision in his abdomen, and drawn out a large portion of his intestines, which he carried before him on a silver tray. After the procession, he restored them to their proper place, and remained in bed many days before he recovered from the effects of this foolish and disgusting act. Another man, on the same occasion, ran a sword through his arm, before the crowding spectators, and then bound, over the wound, without withdrawing the sword, several handkerchiefs, which were soaked with the blood. These facts were described to me by an eye-witness. A spectacle, of a more singular and more disgusting nature used to be not uncommon on similar occasions, but is now very seldom witnessed.* Sometimes, also, "hâwees" (or conjurers and sleight-of-hand performers) exhibit a variety of tricks on these occasions. But the most common of all the performances here mentioned are the mock fights. Similar exhibitions are also sometimes witnessed on the occasion of a circumcision.†

The bride and her party, having arrived at the bridegroom's house, sit down to a repast. Her friends, shortly after, take their departure; leaving with her only her mother and sister, or other near female relations, and one or two other women; usually the bellâneh. The ensuing night is called "Leylet ed-Dukhle," or "the Night of the Entrance."

The bridegroom sits below. Before sunset, he goes to the bath, and there changes his clothes; or he merely does the latter at home, and, after having supped with a party of his friends, waits till a little before the "'eshë" (or time of the night-prayer), or until the third or fourth hour of the night, when, according to general custom, he should repair to some celebrated mosque, such as that

* A correct description of this is given in Burckhardt's 'Arabic Proverbs,' pp. 115, 116.

† Grand zeffehs are sometimes accompanied by a number of cars, each bearing a group of persons of some manufacture or trade performing the usual work of their craft; even such as builders, whitewashers, &c.; including members of all, or almost all, the arts and manufactures practised in the metropolis.

of the Hasaneyn, and there say his prayers. If young, he is generally honoured with a zeffeh on this occasion: he goes to the mosque preceded by musicians with drums and one or more hautboys, and accompanied by a number of friends, and by several men bearing "mesh'als." The



Mesh'als.

mesh'al is a staff with a cylindrical frame of iron at the top filled with flaming wood, or having two, three, four, or five of these receptacles for fire. The party usually proceeds to the mosque with a quick pace, and without much order. A second group of musicians, with the same instruments, or with drums only, closes the procession. The bridegroom is generally dressed in a *kufṭān* with red stripes, and a red *gibbeh*, with a Kash-

meer shawl of the same colour for his turban; and walks between two friends similarly dressed. The prayers are commonly performed merely as a matter of ceremony; and it is frequently the case that the bridegroom does not pray at all, or prays without having previously performed the wudoó, like memlooks, who say their prayers only because they fear their master.* The procession returns from the mosque with more order and display, and very slowly; perhaps because it would be considered unbecoming in the bridegroom to hasten home to take possession of his bride. It is headed, as before, by musicians, and two or more bearers of mesh'als. These are generally followed by two men, bearing, by means of a pole resting horizontally upon their shoulders, a hanging frame, to which are attached about sixty or more small lamps, in four circles, one above another; the uppermost of which circles is made to revolve, being turned round occasionally by one of the two bearers. These numerous lamps, and several mesh'als besides those before mentioned, brilliantly illumine the streets through which the procession passes, and produce a remarkably picturesque effect. The bridegroom and his friends and other attendants follow, advancing in the form of an oblong ring, all facing the interior of the ring, and each bearing in his hand one or more wax candles, and sometimes a sprig of henna or some other flower, excepting the bridegroom and the friend on either side of him. These three form the latter part of the ring, which generally consists of twenty or more persons. At frequent intervals, the party stops for a few minutes; and during each of these pauses, a boy or man, one of the persons who compose the ring, sings a few words of an epithalamium. The sounds of the drums, and the shrill notes of the hautboy (which the bride hears half an hour or more before the procession arrives at the house), cease during these songs. The train is closed, as in the former case, by a second group of musicians.

In the manner above described, the bridegroom's

* Hence this kind of prayer is called "*şalah memáleekeeyeh*," or "the prayer of memlooks."

zeffeh is most commonly conducted ; but there is another mode, that is more respectable, called “ zeffeh sádátee,” which signifies “ the gentlemen’s zeffeh.” In this, the bridegroom is accompanied by his friends in the same manner as before related, and attended and preceded by men bearing mesh’als, but not by musicians : in the place of these are about six or eight men, who, from their being employed as singers on occasions of this kind, are called “ wilád el-láyálee,” or “ sons of the nights.” Thus attended, he goes to the mosque ; and while he returns slowly thence to his house, the singers above mentioned chant, or rather sing, “ muweshshahs ” (or lyric odes) in praise of the Prophet. Having returned to the house, these same persons chant portions of the Kúr-án, one after another, for the amusement of the guests ; then, altogether, recite the opening chapter (the Fát’ḥah) ; after which, one of them sings a “ ḳa-seedeḥ ” (or short poem) in praise of the Prophet : lastly, all of them again sing muweshshahs. After having thus performed, they receive “ nuḳoot ” (or contributions of money) from the bridegroom and his friends.

Soon after his return from the mosque, the bridegroom leaves his friends in a lower apartment, enjoying their pipes and coffee and sherbet. The bride’s mother and sister, or whatever other female relations were left with her, are above ; and the bride herself, and the belláneḥ, in a separate apartment.* If the bridegroom be a youth or young man, it is considered proper that he, as well as the bride, should exhibit some degree of bashfulness : one of his friends, therefore, carries him a part of the way up to the ḥareem. On entering the bride’s apartment, he gives a present to the belláneḥ, and she retires. The bride has a shawl thrown over her head ; and the bridegroom must give her a present of money, which is called “ the price of the uncovering of the face,”† before he attempts to remove this, which she

* Sometimes, when the parties are persons of wealth, the bride is displayed before the bridegroom in different dresses, to the number of seven.

† “ Haḳḳ keshf el-wishsh.” “ Wishsh ” is a vulgar corruption of “ wegh,” or “ wejh.”

does not allow him to do without some apparent reluctance, if not violent resistance, in order to show her maiden modesty. On removing the covering, he says, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful;" and then greets her with this compliment: "The night be blessed," or "— is blessed:" to which she replies, if timidity do not choke her utterance, "God bless thee." The bridegroom now sees the face of his bride for the first time, and generally finds her nearly what he has been led to expect. Often, but not always, a curious ceremony is then performed. The bridegroom takes off every article of the bride's clothing excepting her shirt; seats her upon a mattress or bed, the head of which is turned towards the direction of Mekkeh, placing her so that her back is also turned in that direction; and draws forward, and spreads upon the bed, the lower part of the front of her shirt: having done this, he stands at the distance of rather less than a yard before her, and performs the prayers of two rek'ahs; laying his head and hands, in prostration, upon the part of her shirt that is extended before her lap. He remains with her but a few minutes longer: * having satisfied his curiosity respecting her personal charms, he calls to the women (who generally collect at the door, where they wait in anxious suspense) to raise their cries of joy, or zaghá-reet; and the shrill sounds acquaint the persons below and in the neighbourhood, and often, responded by other women, spread still further the news, that he has acknowledged himself satisfied with his bride: he soon after descends to rejoin his friends, and remains with them an hour, or more, before he returns to his wife. It very seldom happens that the husband, if disappointed in his bride, immediately disgraces and divorces her; in general, he retains her, in this case, a week or more.

Having now described the most usual manner in which the marriages of virgin-brides are conducted in Cairo, I

* I beg to refer the reader, if he desire further details on this subject, to page 117 of Burckhardt's 'Arabic Proverbs.' His account might have been more complete, but he seems to have studied to be particularly concise in this case.

may add a few words on some of the ceremonies observed in other cases of matrimony, both of virgins and of widows or divorced women.

The daughters of the great, generally having baths in their own houses, seldom go to the public bath previously to marriage. A bride of a wealthy family, and her female relations and friends, if there be not a bath in her house, go to the public bath, which is hired for them exclusively, and to the bridegroom's house, without music or canopy, mounted on asses: the bride herself generally wearing a Kashmeer shawl, in the manner of a *habarah*.

If the bridegroom or the bride's family have eunuchs, these ride before the bride; and sometimes a man runs at the head of the procession, crying, "Bless ye the Prophet!"* This man, on entering the house, throws down, upon the threshold, some leaves of the white beet ("salk"), over which the ladies ride. The object of this act is to propitiate fortune. The same man then exclaims, "Assistance from God, and a speedy victory!"†

Marriages, among the Egyptians, are sometimes conducted without any pomp or ceremony even in the case of virgins, by mutual consent of the bridegroom and the bride's family, or the bride herself; and widows and divorced women are never honoured with a *zeffeh* on marrying again. The mere sentence, "I give myself up to thee,"‡ uttered by a female to a man who proposes to become her husband (even without the presence of witnesses, if none can easily be procured), renders her his legal wife, if arrived at puberty; and marriages with widows and divorced women, among the Muslims of Egypt, and other Arabs, are sometimes concluded in this simple manner. The dowry of such women is generally one quarter or third or half the amount of that of a virgin.

In Cairo, among persons not of the lowest order, though in very humble life, the marriage ceremonies are

* "Şalloo 'a-n-nebee." "A-n-nebee" is a vulgar contraction of "ala-n-nebee."

† *Qur-án*, chap. lxi. ver. 13.

‡ "Wahebta lak nefsee."

conducted in the same manner as among the middle orders. But when the expenses of such zeffehs as I have described cannot by any means be paid, the bride is paraded in a very simple manner, covered with a shawl (generally red), and surrounded by a group of her female relations and friends, dressed in their best, or in borrowed, clothes, and enlivened by no other sounds of joy than their zagháreṭ, which they repeat at frequent intervals.

The general mode of zeffeh among the inhabitants of the villages is different from those above described. The bride, usually covered with a shawl, is seated on a camel; and so conveyed to the bridegroom's dwelling. Sometimes four or five women or girls sit with her, on the same camel; one on either side of her, and two or three others behind: the seat being made very wide, and usually covered with carpets or other drapery. She is followed by a group of women singing. In the evening of the wedding, and often during several previous evenings, in a village, the male and female friends of the two parties meet at the bridegroom's house, and pass several hours of the night, in the open air, amusing themselves with songs and a rude kind of dance, accompanied by the sounds of a tambourine or some kind of drum: both sexes sing; but only the women dance.—I have introduced here these few words on the marriage-ceremonies of the peasantry to avoid scattering notes on subjects of the same nature. I now revert to the customs of the people of Cairo.

On the morning after the marriage, "khāwals" * or "gházeeys" (dancing men or girls) perform in the street before the bridegroom's house, or in the court.† On the same morning also, if the bridegroom be a young man, the person who carried him up stairs generally takes him and several friends to an entertainment in the country, where they spend the whole day. This ceremony is called "el-huroobeh," or the flight. Sometimes the bridegroom himself makes the arrangements for it;

* A khāwal is also called "ghā'sh; plural, "gheeyāsh."

† This performance is called the bride's "ṣabaḥēyeh."

and pays part of the expenses, if they exceed the amount of the contributions of his friends ; for they give *nukoot* on this occasion. Musicians and dancing girls are often hired to attend the entertainment. If the bridegroom be a person of the lower orders, he is conducted back in procession, preceded by three or four musicians with drums and hautboys ; his friends and other attendants carrying each a nosegay, as in the *zeffeh* of the preceding night ; and if their return be after sunset, they are accompanied by men bearing mesh'als, lamps, &c. ; and the friends of the bridegroom carry lighted wax candles, besides the nosegays.* Subsequent festivities occasioned by marriage will be described in a later Chapter.

The husband, if he can conveniently so arrange, generally prefers that his mother should reside with him and his wife ; that she may protect his wife's honour, and consequently his own also. It is said that the mother-in-law is, for this reason, called "*hamah*."† The women of Egypt are said to be generally prone to criminal intrigues ; and I fear that, in this respect, they are not unjustly accused. Sometimes a husband keeps his wife in the house of her mother, and pays the daily expenses of both. This ought to make the mother very careful with regard to expenditure, and strict as to her daughter's conduct, lest the latter should be divorced ; but it is said, that, in this case, she often acts as her daughter's procuress, and teaches her innumerable tricks, by which to gain the upper hand over her husband, and to drain his purse. The influence of the wife's mother is also

* Among the peasants of Upper Egypt, the relations and acquaintances of the bridegroom and bride meet together on the day after the marriage : and while a number of the men clap their hands, as an accompaniment to a tambourine, or two, and any other instruments that can be procured, the bride dances before them for a short time. She has a head-veil reaching to her heels, and a printed cotton handkerchief completely covering her face, and wears, externally, the most remarkable of her bridal garments (mentioned by Burckhardt, in the place before referred to, and, in some parts of Egypt, hung over the door of a peasant's house after marriage). Other women, similarly veiled, and dressed in their best, or borrowed, clothes, continue the dance about two hours, or more.

† Thus commonly pronounced, for "*hamáh*," a word derived from the verb "*hama*," "he protected, or guarded."

scarcely less feared when she only enjoys occasional opportunities of seeing her daughter : hence it is held more prudent for a man to marry a female who has neither mother nor any near relations of her own sex ; and some wives are even prohibited receiving any female friends but those who are relations of the husband : they are very few, however, upon whom such severe restrictions are imposed.

For a person who has become familiar with male Muslim society in Cairo, without marrying, it is not so difficult as might be imagined by a stranger to obtain, directly and indirectly, correct and ample information respecting the condition and habits of the women. Many husbands of the middle classes, and some of the higher orders, freely talk of the affairs of the hareem with one who professes to agree with them in their general moral sentiments, if they have not to converse through the medium of an interpreter.

Though the women have a particular portion of the house allotted to them, the *wives*, in general, are not to be regarded as prisoners ; for they are usually at liberty to go out and pay visits, as well as to receive female visitors, almost as often as they please. The slaves, indeed, being subservient to the wives, as well as to their master, or, if subject to the master only, being under an authority almost unlimited, have not that liberty. One of the chief objects of the master in appropriating a distinct suite of apartments to his women, is to prevent their being seen by the male domestics and other men without being covered in the manner prescribed by their religion. The following words of the Kur-án show the necessity under which a Muslim'eh is placed of concealing whatever is attractive in her person or attire from all men, excepting certain relations and some other persons. " And speak unto the believing women, that they restrain their eyes, and preserve their modesty, and discover not their ornaments, except what [necessarily] appeareth thereof : and let them throw their veils over their bosoms, and not show their ornaments, unless to their husbands, or their fathers, or their

husbands' fathers, or their sons, or their husbands' sons, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or those [captives] which their right hands shall possess, or unto such men as attend [them] and have no need [of women], or unto children :—" and let them not make a noise with their feet, that their ornaments which they hide may [thereby] be discovered."* The last passage alludes to the practice of knocking together the anklets which the Arab women in the time of the Prophet used to wear ; and which are still worn by many women in Egypt.

I must here transcribe two notes of eminent commentators on the Kur-án, in illustration of the above extract, and inserted in Sale's translation. This I do, because they would convey an erroneous idea of modern customs with regard to the admission, or non-admission, of certain persons into the hareem. The first is on the above words "or their women," which it thus explains :—"That is, such as are of the Moḥammadan religion : it being reckoned by some unlawful, or, at least, indecent, for a woman who is a true believer to uncover herself before one who is an infidel ; because the latter will hardly refrain from describing her to the men : but others suppose all women in general are here excepted ; for, in this particular, doctors differ." In Egypt, and, I believe, in every other Muslim country, it is not now considered improper for any woman, whether independent, or a servant, or a slave, a Christian, a Jewess, a Muslim'eh, or a pagan, to enter a Muslim's hareem.—The second of the notes above alluded to is on the words "or those captives ;" and is as follows :—"Slaves of either sex are included in this exception, and, as some think, domestic servants who are not slaves, as those of a different nation. It is related that Moḥammad once made a present of a man-slave to his daughter Fáṭimeh ; and when he brought him to her, she had on a garment which was so scanty, that she was obliged to leave either her head or her feet uncovered : and that the Prophet, seeing her in great confusion on that account, told her,

* Chap. xxiv. ver. 31.

she need be under no concern, for that there was none present but her father and her slave." Among the Arabs of the Desert this may still be the case; but in Egypt I have never heard of an instance of an adult male slave being allowed to see the hareem of a respectable man, whether he belonged to that hareem or not; and am assured that it is never permitted. Perhaps the reason why the man-slave of a woman is allowed this privilege by the Kur-án is, because she cannot become his lawful wife as long as he continues her slave: but this is a poor reason for granting him access to the hareem, in such a state of society. It is remarkable that, in the verse of the Kur-án above quoted, uncles are not mentioned as privileged to see their nieces unveiled: some think that they are not admissible, and for this reason, lest they should describe the persons of their nieces to their sons; for it is regarded as highly improper for a man to describe the features or person of a female (as to say, that she has large eyes, a straight nose, small mouth, &c.) to one of his own sex by whom it is unlawful for her to be seen, though it is not considered indecorous to describe her in general terms, as, for instance, to say, "She is a sweet girl, and set off with kohl and henna."

It may be mentioned here, as a general rule, that a man is allowed to see unveiled only his own wives and female slaves, and those females whom he is prohibited, by law, from marrying, on account of their being within certain degrees of consanguinity or family connexion, or having given him suck, or being nearly related to his foster-mother.* The high antiquity of the veil has been alluded to in the first chapter of this work. It has also been mentioned, that it is considered more necessary, in Egypt, for a woman to cover the upper and back part of her head than her face; and more requisite for her to conceal her face than most other parts of her person: for instance, a female who cannot be persuaded to unveil her face in the presence of men, will think it but little shame to display the whole of her bosom, or the greater

* See the chapter on Religion and Laws. Eunuchs are allowed to see the face of any woman: so also are young boys.

part of her leg. There are, it is true, many women among the lower classes in this country who constantly appear in public with unveiled face; but they are almost constrained to do so by the want of a *burko'* (or face-veil), and the difficulty of adjusting the *ṭarḥah* (or head-veil), of which scarcely any woman is destitute, so as to supply the place of the former; particularly when both their hands are occupied in holding some burden which they are carrying upon the head. When a respectable woman is, by any chance, seen with her head or face uncovered, by a man who is not entitled to enjoy that privilege, she quickly assumes or adjusts her *ṭarḥah*, and often exclaims, "O my misfortune!"* or "O my sorrow!"† Motives of coquetry, however, frequently induce an Egyptian woman to expose her face before a man when she thinks that she may appear to do so unintentionally, or that she may be supposed not to see him. A man may also occasionally enjoy opportunities of seeing the face of an Egyptian lady when she really thinks herself unobserved; sometimes at an open lattice, and sometimes on a house-top. Many small houses in Cairo have no apartment on the ground-floor for the reception of male visitors, who therefore ascend to an upper room; but as they go upstairs, they exclaim, several times, "Destoor!" ("Permission!"), or "Yá Sâtir!" ("O Protector!" that is, "O protecting God!"), or use some similar ejaculation, in order to warn any woman who may happen to be in the way, to retire, or to veil herself; which she does by drawing a part of her *ṭarḥah* before her face, so as to leave, at most, only one eye visible. To such an absurd pitch do the Muslims carry their feeling of the sacredness of women, that entrance into the *tombs* of some females is denied to men; as, for instance, the tombs of the Prophet's wives and other females of his family, in the burial-ground of El-Medeenah; into which women are freely admitted: and a man and woman they never bury in the same vault, unless a wall separate the bodies. Yet there are, among the

* "Yá dahwet'ee," for "daawet'ee."

† "Yá nedám'tee," for "nedámetee."

Egyptians, a few persons who are much less particular in this respect : such is one of my Muslim friends here, who generally allows me to see his mother when I call upon him. She is a widow, of about fifty years of age ; but, being very fat, and not looking so old, she calls herself forty. She usually comes to the door of the apartment of the hareem in which I am received (there being no lower apartment in the house for male visitors), and sits there upon the floor, but will never enter the room. Occasionally, and as if by accident, she shows me the whole of her face, with plenty of *kohl* round her eyes ; and does not attempt to conceal her diamonds, emeralds, and other ornaments ; but rather the reverse. The wife, however, I am never permitted to see ; though once I was allowed to talk to her, in the presence of her husband, round the corner of a passage at the top of the stairs.

I believe that, in Egypt, the women are generally under less restraint than in any other country of the Turkish Empire ; so that it is not uncommon to see females of the lower orders flirting and jesting with men in public, and men laying their hands upon them very freely. Still it might be imagined, that the women of the higher and middle classes feel themselves severely oppressed, and are much discontented with the state of seclusion to which they are subjected : but this is not commonly the case ; on the contrary, an Egyptian wife who is attached to her husband is apt to think, if he allow her unusual liberty, that he neglects her, and does not sufficiently love her ; and to envy those wives who are kept and watched with greater strictness.

It is not very common for an Egyptian to have more than one wife, or a concubine-slave ; though the law allows him *four* wives (as I have before stated), and, according to common opinion, as many concubine-slaves as he may choose. But, though a man restrict himself to a single wife, he may change as often as he desires ; and there are certainly not many persons in Cairo who have not divorced one wife, if they have been long married. The husband may, whenever he pleases, say to

his wife, "Thou art divorced:"* if it be his wish, whether reasonable or not, she must return to her parents or friends. This liability to an unmerited divorce is the source of more uneasiness to many wives than all the other troubles to which they are exposed; as they may thereby be reduced to a state of great destitution: but to others, who hope to better their condition, it is, of course, exactly the reverse. I have mentioned, in a former Chapter,† that a man may divorce his wife twice, and each time receive her again without any ceremony; but that he cannot legally take her again after a third divorce until she has been married and divorced by another man. The consequences of a triple divorce conveyed in one sentence‡ are the same, unless the man and his wife agree to infringe the law, or the former deny his having pronounced the sentence; in which latter case, the woman may have much difficulty to enforce his compliance with the law, if she be inclined to do so.

In illustration of this subject, I may mention a case in which an acquaintance of mine was concerned as a witness of the sentence of divorce. He was sitting in a coffee-shop with two other men, one of whom had just been irritated by something that his wife had said or done. After a short conversation upon this affair, the angry husband sent for his wife, and, as soon as she came, said to her, "Thou art trebly divorced:" then, addressing his two companions, he added, "You, my brothers, are witnesses." Shortly after, however, he repented of this act, and wished to take back his divorced wife; but she refused to return to him, and appealed to the "Shara Allah" (or Law of God). The case was tried at the Mahkem'eh. The woman, who was the plaintiff, stated that the defendant was her husband; that he had pronounced against her the sentence of a triple divorce; and that he now wished her to return to him, and live with him as his wife, contrary to the law, and consequently in a state of sin. The defendant denied

* "Entee talikah."

† On the Religion and Laws.

‡ "Entee talikah bi-t-telateh."

that he had divorced her. "Have you witnesses?" said the judge to the plaintiff. She answered, "I have here two witnesses." These were the men who were present in the coffee-shop when the sentence of divorce was pronounced. They were desired to give their evidence; and they stated that the defendant divorced his wife, by a triple sentence, in their presence. The defendant averred that she whom he divorced in the coffee-shop was another wife of his. The plaintiff declared that he had no other wife: but the judge observed to her that it was impossible she could know that; and asked the witnesses what was the name of the woman whom the defendant divorced in their presence? They answered that they were ignorant of her name. They were then asked if they could swear that the plaintiff was the woman who was divorced before them? Their reply was, that they could not swear to a woman whom they had never seen unveiled. Under these circumstances, the judge thought it right to dismiss the case; and the woman was obliged to return to her husband. She might have demanded that he should produce the woman whom he professed to have divorced in the coffee-shop; but he would easily have found a woman to play the part he required; as it would not have been necessary for her to show a marriage-certificate; marriages being almost always performed in Egypt without any written contract, and sometimes even without witnesses.

It not unfrequently happens, that, when a man who has divorced his wife the third time wishes to take her again (she herself consenting to their reunion, and there being no witnesses to the sentence of divorce), he does so without conforming with the offensive law before mentioned. It is also a common custom for a man under similar circumstances to employ a person to marry the divorced woman on the condition of his resigning her, the day after their union, to him, her former husband, whose wife she again becomes, by a second contract; though this is plainly contrary to the spirit of the law. The wife, however, can withhold her consent, unless she is not of age; in which case, her father, or other

lawful guardian, may marry her to whom he pleases. A poor man (generally a very ugly person, and often one who is blind) is usually chosen to perform this office. He is termed a "Mustahall," or "Mustahill," or a "Mohallil." It is often the case that the man thus employed is so pleased with the beauty of the woman to whom he is introduced on these terms, or with her riches, that he refuses to give her up; and the law cannot compel him to divorce her, unless he act unjustly towards her as her husband; which of course he takes good care not to do. But a person may employ a mustahall without running this risk. It is the custom of many wealthy Turks, and some of the people of Egypt, to make use of a slave, generally a black, their own property, to officiate in this character. Sometimes, a slave is purchased for this purpose; or if the person who requires him for such a service be acquainted with a slave-dealer, he asks from the latter a present of a slave; signifying that he will give him back again. The uglier the slave, the better. The Turks generally choose one not arrived at puberty; which the tenets of their sect allow. As soon as the woman has accomplished her "'eddeh" (or the period during which she is obliged to wait before she can marry again), the husband who divorced her, having previously obtained her consent to what he is about to do, introduces the slave to her, and asks her if she will be married to him. She replies that she will. She is accordingly wedded to the slave, in the presence of witnesses; and a dowry is given to her, to make the marriage perfectly legal. The slave consummates the marriage; and thus becomes the woman's legitimate husband. Immediately after, or on the following morning, her former husband presents this slave to her as her own property, and the moment that she accepts him, her marriage with him becomes dissolved; for it is unlawful for a woman to be the wife of her own slave: though she may emancipate a slave, and *then* marry him. As soon as her marriage is dissolved by her accepting the gift of the slave, she may give back this slave to her husband: but it seldom happens that the latter will allow

a person who has been a *mustahall* for him to remain in his house. The wife, after this proceeding, may, as soon as she has again accomplished her *'eddeh*, become reunited to her former husband, after having been separated from him, by the necessity of her fulfilling two *'eddehs*, about half a year, or perhaps more.

That the facility of divorce has depraving effects upon both sexes may be easily imagined. There are many men in this country who, in the course of ten years, have married as many as twenty, thirty, or more wives; and women not far advanced in age who have been wives to a dozen or more men successively. I have heard of men who have been in the habit of marrying a new wife almost every month. A person may do this although possessed of very little property: he may choose, from among the females of the lower orders in the streets of Cairo, a handsome young widow or divorced woman who will consent to become his wife for a dowry of about ten shillings; and when he divorces her, he need not give her more than double that sum to maintain her during her ensuing *'eddeh*. It is but just, however, to add, that such conduct is generally regarded as very disgraceful; and that few parents in the middle or higher classes will give a daughter in marriage to a man who has divorced many wives.

Polygamy, which is also attended with very injurious effects upon the morals of the husband and the wives, and only to be defended because it serves to prevent a greater immorality than it occasions, is more rare among the higher and middle classes than it is among the lower orders; and it is not very common among the latter. A poor man may indulge himself with two or more wives, each of whom may be able, by some art or occupation, nearly to provide her own subsistence; but most persons of the middle and higher orders are deterred from doing so by the consideration of the expense and discomfort which they would incur. A man having a wife who has the misfortune to be barren, and being too much attached to her to divorce her, is sometimes induced to take a second wife, merely in the hope of obtaining off-

spring; and from the same motive, he may take a third, and a fourth; but fickle passion is the most evident and common motive both to polygamy and repeated divorces. They are comparatively very few who gratify this passion by the former practice. I believe that not more than one husband among twenty has two wives.

When there are two or more wives belonging to one man, the first (that is, the one first married) generally enjoys the highest rank; and is called "the great lady."* Hence it often happens that, when a man who has already one wife wishes to marry another girl or woman, the father of the latter, or the female herself who is sought in marriage, will not consent to the union unless the first wife be previously divorced. The women, of course, do not approve of a man's marrying more than one wife. Most men of wealth, or of moderate circumstances, and even many men of the lower orders, if they have two or more wives, have, for each, a separate house. The wife has, or can oblige her husband to give her, a particular description of lodging,† which is either a separate house, or a suite of apartments (consisting of a room in which to sleep and pass the day, a kitchen, and a latrina) that are, or may be made, separate and shut out from any other apartments in the same house. A fellow-wife is called "durrah."‡ The quarrels of durrahs are often talked of: for it may be naturally inferred, that, when two wives share the affection and attentions of the same man, they are not always on terms of amity with each other; and the same is generally the case with a wife and a concubine-slave living in the same house, and under similar circumstances.§ If the chief lady be barren, and an inferior, either wife or slave, bear a child to her husband or master, it commonly results that the latter woman becomes a favourite of the man,

* "Es-sitt el-kebeereh."

† Called "meskin shar'ee."

‡ Commonly thus pronounced (or rather "durrah," with a soft *d*) for "darrah;" originally, perhaps, by way of a pun; as "durrah" is a common name for a parrot.

§ The law enjoins a husband who has two or more wives to be strictly impartial to them in every respect, but compliance with its dictates in this matter is rare.

and that the chief wife or mistress is "despised in her eyes," as Abraham's wife was in the eyes of Hagar on the same account.* It therefore not very unfrequently happens that the first wife loses her rank and privileges; another becomes the chief lady, and, being the favourite of her husband, is treated by her rival or rivals, and by all the members and visitors of the hareem, with the same degree of outward respect which the first wife previously enjoyed: but sometimes the poisoned cup is employed to remove her. A preference given to a second wife is often the cause of the first's being registered as "nāshizeh,"† either on her husband's or her own application at the Maḥkem'eh. Yet many instances are known of neglected wives behaving with exemplary and unfeigned submission to their husband, in such cases, and with amiable good nature towards the favourite.‡

Some wives have female slaves who are their own property, generally purchased for them, or presented to them, before marriage. These cannot be the husband's concubines without their mistress's permission, which is sometimes granted (as it was in the case of Hagar, Sarah's bondwoman); but very seldom. Often, the wife will not even allow her female slave or slaves to appear unveiled in the presence of her husband. Should such a slave, without the permission of her mistress, become the concubine of the husband, and bear him a child, the child is a slave, unless, prior to its birth, the mother be sold, or presented, to the father.

The white female slaves are mostly in the possession of wealthy Turks. The concubine-slaves § in the houses of Egyptians of the higher and middle classes are, generally, Abyssinians, of a deep brown or bronze com-

* See Genesis, xvi. 4.

† This has been explained in Chapter III., p. 138.

‡ In general the most beautiful of a man's wives or slaves is, of course, for a time, his greatest favourite; but in many (if not most) cases, the lasting favourite is not the most handsome. The love of a Muslim, therefore, is not always merely sensual; nor does the relative condition and comfort of his wife, or of each of his wives, invariably depend so much on his caprice, or her own personal charms, as on her general conduct and disposition.

§ A Muslim cannot take as a concubine a slave who is an idolatress.

plexion. In their features, as well as their complexions, they appear an intermediate race between the negroes and white people : but the difference between them and either of the above-mentioned races is considerable. They themselves, however, think that they differ so little from the white people, that they cannot be persuaded to act as servants, with due obedience, to their masters' wives ; and the black (or negro) slave-girl feels exactly in the same manner towards the Abyssinian ; but is perfectly willing to serve the white ladies. I should here mention, that the slaves who are termed Abyssinians are not from the country properly called Abyssinia, but from the neighbouring territories of the Gallas. Most of them are handsome. The average price of one of these girls is from ten to fifteen pounds sterling, if moderately handsome ; but this is only about half the sum that used to be given for one a few years ago. They are much esteemed by the voluptuaries of Egypt ; but are of delicate constitution : many of them die, in this country, of consumption. The price of a white slave-girl is usually from treble to tenfold that of an Abyssinian ; and the price of a black girl, about half or two-thirds, or considerably more if well instructed in the art of cookery. The black slaves are generally employed as menials.*

Almost all of the slaves become converts to the faith of El-Islám ; but, in general, they are little instructed in the rites of their new religion ; and still less in its doctrines. Most of the white female slaves who were in Egypt during my former visit to this country were Greeks : vast numbers of that unfortunate people having been made prisoners by the Turkish and Egyptian army under Ibráheem Básha ; and many of them, males and females, including even infants scarcely able to walk, sent to Egypt to be sold. Latterly, from the impoverishment of the higher classes in this country, the demand for white slaves has been small. A few, some of whom undergo a kind of preparatory education (being instructed

* The white female slave is called "Gáriyeh Beyda ;" the Abyssinian, "Gáriyeh Habasheeyeh ;" and the black, "Gáriyeh Sôda."

in music or other accomplishments, at Constantinople), are brought from Circassia and Georgia. The white slaves, being often the only female companions, and sometimes the wives, of the Turkish grandees, and being generally preferred by them before the free ladies of Egypt, hold a higher rank than the latter in common opinion. They are richly dressed, presented with valuable ornaments, indulged, frequently, with almost every luxury that can be procured, and, when it is not their lot to wait upon others, may, in some cases, be happy: as lately has been proved, since the termination of the war in Greece, by many females of that country, captives in Egyptian hareems, refusing their offered liberty, which all of these cannot be supposed to have done from ignorance of the state of their parents and other relations, or the fear of exposing themselves to poverty. But, though some of them are undoubtedly happy, at least for a time, their number is comparatively small: most are fated to wait upon more favoured fellow-prisoners, or upon Turkish ladies, or to receive the unwelcome caresses of a wealthy dotard, or of a man who has impaired his body and mind by excesses of every kind; and, when their master or mistress becomes tired of them, or dies, are sold again (if they have not borne children), or emancipated, and married to some person in humble life, who can afford them but few of the comforts to which they have been accustomed. The female slaves in the houses of persons of the middle classes in Egypt are generally more comfortably circumstanced than those in the hareems of the wealthy: if concubines, they are, in most cases, without rivals to disturb their peace; and if menials, their service is light, and they are under less restraint. Often, indeed, if mutual attachment subsist between her and her master, the situation of a concubine-slave is more fortunate than that of a wife: for the latter may be cast off by her husband in a moment of anger, by an irrevocable sentence of divorce, and reduced to a state of poverty: whereas a man very seldom dismisses a female slave without providing for her in such a manner that, if she have not been used to luxuries, she

suffers but little, if at all, by the change: this he generally does by emancipating her, giving her a dowry, and marrying her to some person of honest reputation; or by presenting her to a friend. I have already mentioned, that a master cannot sell nor give away a slave who has borne him a child, if he acknowledge it to be his own; and that she is entitled to her freedom on his death. It often happens that such a slave, immediately after the birth of her child, is emancipated, and becomes her master's wife: when she has become free, she can no longer lawfully supply the place of a wife unless he marry her. Many persons consider it disgraceful even to sell a female slave who has been long in their service. Most of the Abyssinian and black slave-girls are abominably corrupted by the Gellábs, or slave-traders, of Upper Egypt and Nubia, by whom they are brought from their native countries: there are very few of the age of eight or nine years who have not suffered brutal violence; and so severely do these children, particularly the Abyssinians, and boys as well as girls, feel the treatment which they endure from the Gellábs, that many instances occur of their drowning themselves during the voyage down the Nile.* The female slaves of every class are somewhat dearer than the males of the same age. Those who have not had the small-pox are usually sold for less than the others. Three days' trial is generally allowed to the purchaser; during which time, the girl remains in his, or some friend's, hareem; and the women make their report to him. Snoring, grinding the teeth, or talking during sleep, are commonly considered sufficient reasons for returning her to the dealer. The dresses of the female slaves are similar to those of the Egyptian women.

The female servants, who are Egyptian girls or women, are those to whom the lowest occupations are allotted. They generally veil their faces in the presence of their masters, with the head-veil; drawing a part of this before the face, so that they leave only one eye and one

* The Gellábs generally convey their slaves partly over the desert and partly down the river.

hand at liberty to see and perform what they have to do. When a male visitor is received by the master of a house in an apartment of the hareem (the females of the family having been sent into another apartment on the occasion), he is usually, or often, waited upon by a female servant, who is always veiled.

Such are the relative conditions of the various classes in the hareem. A short account of their usual habits and employments must be added.

The wives, as well as the female slaves, are not only often debarred from the privilege of eating with the master of the family, but also required to wait upon him when he dines or sups, or even takes his pipe and coffee in the hareem. They frequently serve him as menials; fill and light his pipe, make coffee for him, and prepare his food, or, at least, certain dainty dishes; and, if I might judge from my own experience, I should say that most of them are excellent cooks; for, when a dish has been recommended to me because made by the wife of my host, I have generally found it especially good. The wives of men of the higher and middle classes make a great study of pleasing and fascinating their husbands by unremitted attentions, and by various arts. Their coquetry is exhibited, even in their ordinary gait, when they go abroad, by a peculiar twisting of the body.* In the presence of the husband, they are usually under more or less restraint; and hence they are better pleased when his visits, during the day, are not very frequent or long: in his absence, they often indulge in noisy merriment.

The diet of the women is similar to that of the men, but more frugal; and their manner of eating is the same. Many of them are allowed to enjoy the luxury of smoking; for this habit is not considered unbecoming in a female, however high her rank; the odour of the finer kinds of the tobacco used in Egypt being very delicate. Their pipes are generally more slender than those of the men, and more ornamented; and the mouth-piece is sometimes partly composed of coral, in the place of amber. They generally make use of perfumes, such as musk,

* The motion here described they term "ghung."

civet, &c. ; and often, also, of cosmetics, and particularly of several preparations which they eat or drink with the view of acquiring what they esteem a proper degree of plumpness ;* one of these preparations is extremely disgusting ; being chiefly composed of mashed beetles.† Many of them also have a habit of chewing frankincense,‡ and labdanum,§ which impart a perfume to the breath. The habit of frequent ablutions render them cleanly in person. They spend but little time in the operations of the toilet ; and, after having dressed themselves in the morning, seldom change their clothes during the day. Their hair is generally braided in the bath ; and not undone afterwards for several days.

The care of their children is the primary occupation of the ladies of Egypt : they are also charged with the superintendence of domestic affairs ; but, in most families, the husband alone attends to the household expenses. Their leisure-hours are mostly spent in working with the needle ; particularly in embroidering handkerchiefs, head-veils, &c., upon a frame called "menseg," with coloured silks and gold. Many women, even in the houses of the wealthy, replenish their private purses by ornamenting handkerchiefs and other things in this manner, and employing a "delláleh" (or female broker) to take them to the market, or to other hareems, for sale. The visit of one hareem to another often occupies nearly a whole day. Eating, smoking, drinking coffee and sherbet, gossiping, and displaying their finery, are sufficient amusements to the company. On such occasions, the master of the house is never allowed to enter the hareem, unless on some particular and unavoidable busi-

* The Egyptians (unlike the Maghrab'ees, and some other people of Africa and of the East) do not generally admire very fat women. In his love-songs, the Egyptian commonly describes the object of his affections as of slender figure and small waist.

† I observed here,—"It would seem that these insects were eaten by the Jews (see Leviticus, xi. 22) ; but we cannot suppose that they derived this custom from the Egyptians, who regarded the beetle as sacred."—A learned friend, however, has informed me, that the word rendered "beetle" in our version of the passage of Scripture which occasioned this remark properly signifies a kind of locust.

‡ "Libán."

§ "Ládin."



The Menseg.—This is of walnut-wood, inlaid with mother-of-pearl and tortoise-shell. The more common sort is of beech.

ness ; and in this case he must give notice of his approach, and let the visitors have sufficient time to veil themselves, or to retire to an adjoining room. Being thus under no fear of his sudden intrusion, and being naturally of a lively and an unreserved disposition, they indulge in easy gaiety, and not unfrequently in youthful frolic. When their usual subjects of conversation are exhausted, sometimes one of the party entertains the rest with the recital of some wonderful or facetious tale. The Egyptian ladies are very seldom instructed either in music or dancing ; but they take great delight in the performances of professional musicians and public dancers ; and often amuse themselves and their guests, in the absence of better performers and better instruments, by beating the “ darabukkeh ” (which is a kind of drum) and the “ țár ”

(or tambourine *); though seldom in houses so situated that many passengers might hear the sounds of festivity. On the occasion of any great rejoicing among the women (such as takes place on account of the birth of a son, or the celebration of a circumcision, or a wedding, &c.), "A'l'mehs" (or professional female singers) are often introduced; but not for the mere amusement of the women, on common occasions, in any respectable family; for this would be considered indecorous. The "Gházeeyehs" (or public dancing-girls), who exhibit in the streets with unveiled faces, are very seldom admitted into a harem; but on such occasions as those above mentioned they often perform in front of the house or in the court, though by many persons even this is not deemed strictly proper. The "A'látees" (or male musicians) are never hired exclusively for the amusement of the women; but chiefly for that of the men: they always perform in the assembly of the latter: their concert, however, is distinctly heard by the inmates of the harem.†

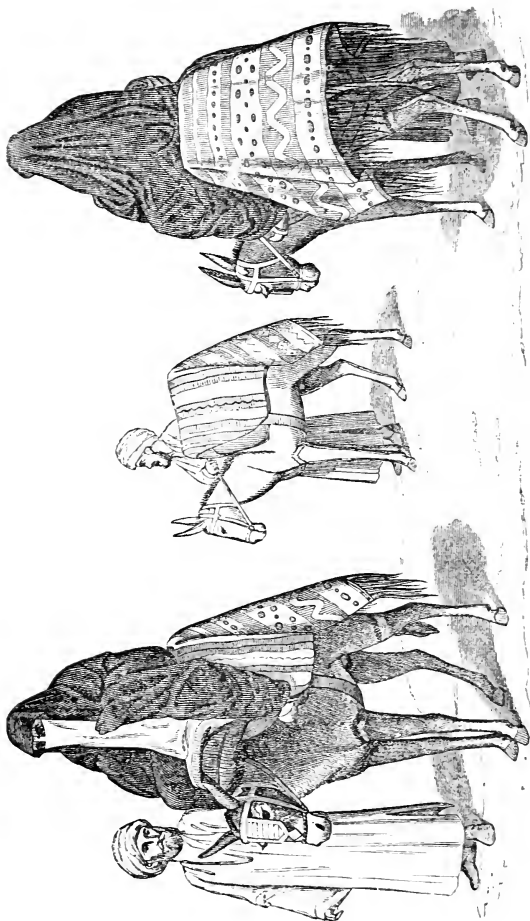
When the women of the higher or middle classes go out to pay a visit, or for any other purpose, they generally ride upon asses. They sit astride, upon a very high and broad saddle, which is covered with a small carpet; and each is attended by a man on one or on each side. Generally, all the women of a harem ride out together; one behind another. Mounted as above described, they present a very singular appearance. Being raised so high above the back of the "homár ‡ 'álee" (or the "high ass"—for so the animal which they ride, furnished with the high saddle, is commonly called §), they seem very insecurely seated; but I believe this is not really the case: the ass is well girthed and sure-footed; and proceeds with a slow, ambling pace, and very easy motion. The ladies of the highest rank, as

* Descriptions and engravings of these instruments will be given in Chapter XVIII.

† The performances of the A'látees, A'l'mehs, and Gházeeyehs, will be described in Chapter XIX.

‡ Thus commonly pronounced for "hemár."

§ It is also called "homár mughattee" (covered ass)



Ladies riding.

well as those of the middling classes, ride asses thus equipped : they are very seldom seen upon mules or horses. The asses are generally hired. When a lady cannot procure a ḥomár'álee, she rides one of the asses equipped for the use of the men ; but has a "seggádeh" (or prayer-carpet) placed over its saddle ; and the inferior members of the ḥareem, and females of the middle orders, often do the same. Ladies never walk abroad, unless they have to go but a very short distance. They have a slow and shuffling gait, owing to the difficulty of retaining the slippers upon their feet ; and, in walking, they always hold the front edges of the ḥabarah in the manner represented in the engraving in page 73 of this volume. Whether walking or riding, they are regarded with much respect in public : no well-bred man stares at them ; but rather directs his eyes another way. They are never seen abroad at night, if not compelled to go out or return at that time by some pressing and extraordinary necessity : it is their usual rule to return from paying a visit before sunset. The ladies of the higher orders never go to a shop, but send for whatever they want ; and there are numerous dellálehs who have access to the ḥareems, and bring all kinds of ornaments, articles of female apparel, &c., for sale. Nor do these ladies, in general, visit the public bath, unless invited to accompany thither some of their friends ; for most of them have baths in their own houses.

CHAPTER VII.

DOMESTIC LIFE—*continued.*

THE domestic life of the *lower orders* will be the subject of the present Chapter. In most respects it is so simple that, in comparison with the life of the middle and higher classes, of which we have just been taking a view, it offers but little to our notice.

The lower orders in Egypt, with the exception of a very small proportion, chiefly residing in the large towns, consist of Felláheen (or Agriculturists). Most of those in the great towns, and a few in the smaller towns and some of the villages, are petty tradesmen or artificers, or obtain their livelihood as servants, or by various labours. In all cases their earnings are very small; barely sufficient, in general, and sometimes insufficient, to supply them and their families with the cheapest necessities of life.

Their food chiefly consists of bread (made of millet or of maize), milk, new cheese, eggs, small salted fish,* cucumbers and melons and gourds of a great variety of kinds, onions and leeks,† beans, chick-peas, lupins, the fruit of the black egg-plant, lentils, &c., dates (both fresh and dried), and pickles. Most of the vegetables they eat in a crude state. When the maize (or Indian corn) is nearly ripe, many ears of it are plucked, and toasted or baked, and eaten thus by the peasants. Rice is too dear to be an article of common food for the felláheen; and flesh-meat they very seldom taste. There is one luxury, however, which most of them enjoy; and that is smoking the cheap tobacco of their country, merely dried, and broken up. It is of a pale, greenish colour, when dried, and of a mild flavour. Though all the articles of food mentioned above are extremely cheap, there are many poor persons who often have nothing with which to season their coarse bread but the mixture called “*dukḡah*,” described in a

* Called “*feseekh*.”

† See Numbers, xi. 5.

former Chapter.* It is surprising to observe how simple and poor is the diet of the Egyptian peasantry, and yet how robust and healthy most of them are, and how severe is the labour which they can undergo.

The women of the lower orders seldom pass a life of inactivity. Some of them are even condemned to greater drudgery than the men. Their chief occupations are the preparing of the husband's food, fetching water (which they carry in a large vessel on the head), spinning cotton, linen, or woollen yarn, and making the fuel called "gel-leh," which is composed of the dung of cattle, kneaded with chopped straw, and formed into round flat cakes: these they stick upon the walls or roofs of their houses, or upon the ground, to dry in the sun; and then use for heating their ovens, and for other purposes. They are in a state of much greater subjection to their husbands than is the case among the superior classes. Not always is a poor woman allowed to eat with her husband. When she goes out with him she generally walks behind him; and if there be anything for either of them to carry, it is usually borne by the wife; unless it be merely a pipe or a stick. Some women, in the towns, keep shops; and sell bread, vegetables, &c.; and thus contribute as much as their husbands, or even more than the latter, to the support of their families. When a poor Egyptian is desirous of marrying, the chief object of his consideration is the dowry, which is usually from about twenty "riyáls" (or nine shillings) to four times that amount, if consisting only of money; and rather less, if, as is the case throughout a great part of Egypt, it comprise certain articles of clothing: if he can afford to give the dowry, he seldom hesitates to marry; for a little additional exertion will enable him to support a wife and two or three children. At the age of five or six years the children become of use to tend the flocks and herds; and at a more advanced age, until they marry, they assist their fathers in the operations of agriculture. The poor in Egypt have often to depend entirely upon their sons for support in their old age; but many parents are deprived of these aids, and consequently reduced to beggary, or almost to star-

vation. A few months ago the Básha, during his voyage from Alexandria to this city (Cairo), happening to land at a village on the bank of the Nile, a poor man of the place ran up to him, and grasped his sleeve so tightly that the surrounding attendants could not make him quit his hold: he complained, that, although he had been once in very comfortable circumstances, he had been reduced to utter destitution by having his sons taken from him in his old age as recruits for the army. The Básha (who generally pays attention to personal applications) relieved him; but it was by ordering that the richest man in the village should give him a cow.

A young family, however, is sometimes an insupportable burden to poor parents. Hence, it is not a very rare occurrence, in Egypt, for children to be publicly carried about for sale, by their mothers or by women employed by the fathers: but this very seldom happens except in cases of great distress. When a mother dies, leaving one or more children unweaned, and the father and other surviving relations are so poor as not to be able to procure a nurse, this singular mode of disposing of the child or children is often resorted to; or sometimes an infant is laid at the door of a mosque, generally when the congregation is assembled to perform the noon-prayers of Friday; and in this case it usually happens that some member of the congregation, on coming out of the mosque, and seeing the poor foundling, is moved with pity, and takes it home to rear in his family, not as a slave, but as an adopted child; or, if not, it is taken under the care of some person until an adoptive father or mother be found for it. A short time ago, a woman offered for sale, to the mistress of a family with whom a friend of mine is acquainted in this city, a child a few days old, which she professed to have found at the door of a mosque. The lady said that she would take the child, to rear it for the sake of God, and in the hope that her own child, an only one, might be spared to her as a reward for her charity; and handed, to the woman who brought the infant, ten piasters (then equivalent to a little more than two shillings): but the offered remuneration was rejected. This shows that infants are some-

times made mere objects of traffic; and some persons who purchase them may make them their slaves, and sell them again. I have been informed, by a slave-dealer (and his assertion has been confirmed to me by other persons), that young Egyptian girls are sometimes sold as slaves from other countries, either by a parent or by some other relation. The slave-dealer here alluded to said, that several such girls had been committed to him for sale; and by their own consent: they were taught to expect rich dresses and great luxuries; and were instructed to say, that they had been brought from their own country when only three or four years of age, and that they consequently were ignorant of their native language, and could speak only Arabic.

It often happens, too, that a felláh, in a state of great poverty, is induced, by the offer of a sum of money, to place his son in a situation far worse than that of ordinary slavery. When a certain number of recruits are required from a village, the sheykh of the village often adopts the plan that gives him the least trouble to obtain them, which is, to take the sons of those persons who are possessed of most property. Under such circumstances, a father, rather than part with his son, generally offers, to one of his poorer fellow-villagers, a sum equivalent to one or two pounds sterling, to procure a son of the latter, as a substitute for his own; and usually succeeds; though the love of offspring prevails among the Egyptians as much as filial piety; and most parents have a great horror of parting with their children, particularly if taken for recruits, as is proved by the means to which they have recourse for the prevention of such an occurrence. There is now (in 1834) seldom to be found, in any of the villages, an able-bodied youth or young man who has not had one or more of his teeth broken out (that he may not be able to bite a cartridge), or a finger cut off, or an eye pulled out or blinded, to prevent his being taken for a recruit. Old women and others make a regular trade of going about from village to village, to perform these operations upon the boys; and the parents themselves are sometimes the operators. But, from what has been said before, it appears that it is

not always affection alone that prompts the parents to have recourse to such expedients to prevent their being deprived of their children.

The Felláheen of Egypt cannot be justly represented in a very favourable light with regard to their domestic and social condition and manners. In the worst points of view, they resemble their Bedawee ancestors, without possessing many of the virtues of the inhabitants of the desert, unless in an inferior degree; and the customs which they have inherited from their forefathers often have a very baneful effect upon their domestic state. It has before been mentioned that they are descended from various Arab tribes who have settled in Egypt at different periods; and that the distinction of tribes is still preserved by the inhabitants of the villages throughout this country. In the course of years, the descendants of each tribe of settlers have become divided into numerous branches, and these minor tribes have distinct appellations, which have also often been given to the village or villages, or district, which they inhabit. Those who have been longest established in Egypt have retained less of Bedawee manners, and have more infringed the purity of their race by intermarriages with Copt proselytes to the Muslim faith, or with the descendants of such persons: hence, they are often despised by the tribes more lately settled in this country, who frequently, in contempt, term the former "Felláheen," while they arrogate to themselves the appellation of "Arabs" or "Bedaweess." The latter, whenever they please, take the daughters of the former in marriage, but will not give their own daughters in return; and if one of them be killed by a person of the inferior tribe, they kill two, three, or even four, in blood-revenge. The prevalence of the barbarous Bedawee law of blood-revenge among the inhabitants of the villages of Egypt has been mentioned in a former Chapter: the homicide, or any person descended from him, or from his great-grandfather's father, is killed by any of such relations of the person whom he has slain; and when the homicide happens to be of one tribe, and the person killed of another, often a petty war breaks forth between

these two tribes, and is sometimes continued, or occasionally renewed, during a period of several years. The same is also frequently the result of a trifling injury committed by a member of one tribe upon a person of another. In many instances, the blood-revenge is taken a century or more after the commission of the act which has occasioned it; when the feud, for that time, has lain dormant, and perhaps is remembered by scarcely more than one individual. Two tribes in Lower Egypt, which are called "Saad" and "Harám," are most notorious for these petty wars and feuds;* and hence their names are commonly applied to any two persons or parties at enmity with each other. It is astonishing that, in the present day, such acts (which, if committed in a town or city in Egypt, would be punished by the death of, perhaps, more than one of the persons concerned) should be allowed. Some other particulars respecting blood-revenge, and its consequences, have been stated in the chapter above alluded to. The avenging of blood is allowed by the *Kur-án*; but moderation and justice are enjoined in its execution; and the petty wars which it so often occasions in the present age are in opposition to a precept of the Prophet, who said, "If two Muslims contend with their swords, the slayer and the slain will be in the fire [of Hell]."

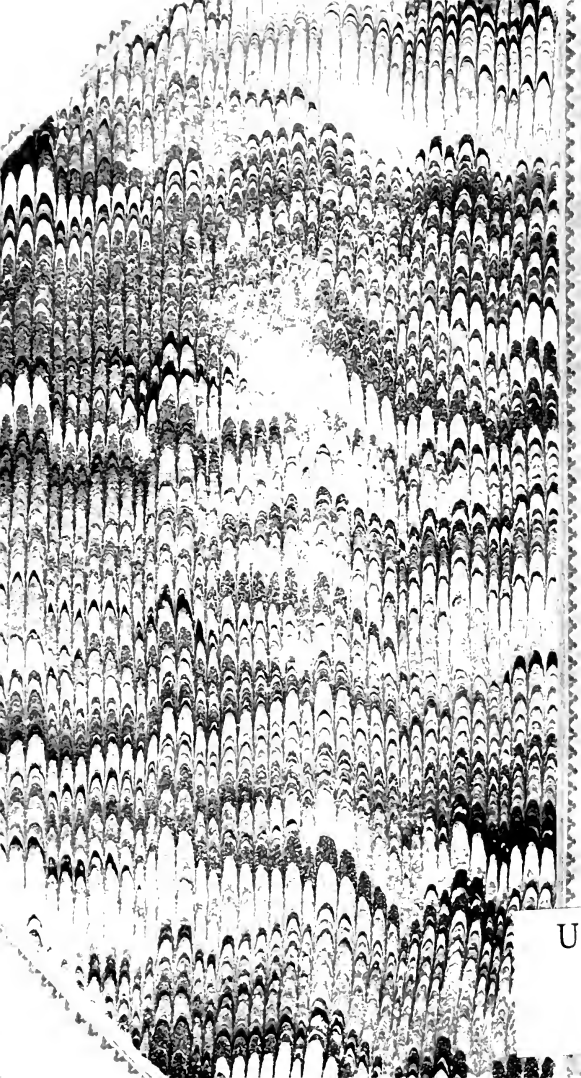
The *Felláheen* of Egypt resemble the *Bedawees* in other respects. When a *Felláhah* is found to have been unfaithful to her husband, in general, he, or her brother, throws her into the Nile, with a stone tied to her neck; or cuts her in pieces, and then throws her remains into the river. In most instances, also, a father or brother punishes in the same manner an unmarried daughter or sister who has been guilty of incontinence. These relations are considered as more disgraced than the husband by the crime of the woman; and are often despised if they do not thus punish her.

* Like the "Keys" and "Yemen" of Syria.

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